SOVIET RUSSIA

ITS SOCIALISM



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BY

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DEDICATED

TO

MY MOTHER

"*A perfect woman, nobly planned*
To warn, to comfort and command."

WORDSWORTH

PREFACE

These pages are written to serve as an indication of what Soviet Russia has been able to achieve in the brief spell of twenty years of its rule. Whether Communism as established by that country is a machinery which could be adapted to our own, is not the point. It is necessary for the student of history and economics to study all points of view, in order to arrive at an unbiassed conclusion. It is, therefore, more as an historical survey than in any spirit of active advocacy or partisanship, that this book has been written.

What shocks us is the open and defiant flouting of justice. An honest man is God's best handiwork, as said by Pope. Honesty of purpose and honesty of action should be the lever and fulcrum, the warp and woof of our political economy. "The true veins of wealth are not in the rock but in the flesh" as Ruskin said and what can be the worse and more appropriate indictment of the present social order than the fact that our poor are not only kept in abject poverty, but are deprived, to put it in the words of Ruskin, "of wisdom, virtue and salvation." The following passage from Ruskin's "Unto This Last" (pages 112-113) is fraught with such wholesome truth that one can not but quote it:—

"The final outcome and consummation of all wealth is in the producing as many as possible full-breathing, bright-eyed and happy hearted human creatures.

Charitable persons suppose the worst fault of the rich is to refuse the people meat; and the people cry for their meat, kept back by fraud, to the Lord of the Multitudes. Alas, it is not meat of which the refusal is the most cruel or to which the claim is most valid. The life is more than the meat! The rich not only refuse food to the poor; they refuse wisdom; they refuse virtue; they refuse salvation. Ye sheep without shepherd, it is not the pasture that has been shut from you, but the presence. Meat! Perhaps your right to that may be tenable but other rights have to be pleaded first. Claim your crumbs from the table, if you will; but claim them as children, not as dogs; claim your right to be fed, but claim more loudly your right to be holy, perfect and pure."

Mr. Harold Butler, Director of the International Labour Office, in the course of a broadcast talk said recently, "New ideas seem to be slowly penetrating to all classes of society. That is the best hope for the advancement of India and for the solution of the great economic and social problem with which it is confronted. To solve it, will require not only the wise planning of governments, both Central & Provincial but also the active co-operation of the whole people." In the deliberation of a plan for the economic regeneration of India, by the people and the Government, the example set by Soviet Russia, should be of great aid and assistance. To ignore its existence and condemn it, is a policy of short sightedness.

Maitland-Makgill Crichton,—a young Englishman, who visited Russia in 1932, when that country was passing through a critical phase of its existence, owing

to the trouble of the peasants,—and no admirer of Soviet Russia and its Communism, says in the preface of his book, "Russian Close-Up". "There still remains a large section of opinion in Europe and elsewhere, that will not hear the name of the Bolsheviks even mentioned, except for the purpose of pouring out abuse."

In India, the Capitalist Press makes it a feature of its policy, to run down Soviet Russia and its Socialism with bell, book and candle, without remorse or justification, on the slightest pretext. It is this attitude that requires correction.

In the last few years, the number of books, written on Russia, has increased considerably, presenting opposing views of that country and the results of its exclusive system of government. But of all the publications, Sidney and Beatrice Webb's "Soviet Russia—A New Civilisation" appears to be the most masterly production, commendable in every respect. It is a fruitful mine of information. It has been the mainspring of guidance and inspiration to the author of these humble outlines.

Among the other books consulted are "Red Medicine," Crichton's "Russian Close-Up," Karl Marx's "The Capital," "The Soviet State" by Bertram W. Maxwell "Soviet Economics" edited by Dr. Gerhard Dobbert, "I was a Soviet Worker" by Andrew Smith, Lenin's Works, "Soviet Side-Lights" by M. N. Masani, "Soviet Democracy" by Pat Sloan, "The Labour Party in Perspective" by C. N. Attlee, "Soviet Man—Now" by Iswolsky. "The Russian Experiment" by K. T. Shah, "Why Socialism" by Jayaprakash Narayan,

"Soviet Russia" by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the books in the "Labour Shows the Way" series, "The Simple Case for Socialism" by G. D. H. Cole, "The Modern Case for Socialism" by A. W. Humphrey, the Works of H. G. Wells, "The Spectre of Communism" by Henry Gibbs and "Plan or No Plan" by Barbara Wootton.

If these few simple pages can inspire enthusiasm for the rebuilding of the social edifice on the foundation of equity and justice, not necessarily on the lines of Soviet Russia, but as best suited to the soil and tradition of India, the labour of love spent on this attempt would be amply rewarded.

My grateful thanks are due to Monsieur Chaubal, Professor of French, who translated for me in English the French inscriptions, in the Russian Pavilion at the International Exposition, in Paris, 1937 and to other kind friends especially Mr. P. C. Tarapore the versatile editor of "The Daily Gazette" and Mr. Jehangir F. Kotwal for reading and correcting the manuscript and for their suggestions.

The attempt made in these pages is fragmentary no doubt and the author relies upon the generosity of the kind readers to over-look its faults and shortcomings.

M. K. S.

Karachi, June 1939

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Failure of Capitalism

INVAIN does Capitalism revile Socialism, and try to prop up the tottering fabric of the present order. Its record of failure is evident. The wars, the strifes and the struggles, the strikes, the lock-outs, ceaseless restlessness and discontent, insecurity of employment, misery, poverty, starvation, exploitation of the weak by the strong—these are included in the tale of its failure. It is said there is enough in nature to supply the human wants of all. But has Capitalism brought any appreciable improvement into the living conditions of the multitudes who plod day in and day out, denied of their share of nature's provision?

What is Socialism

G. D. H. Cole in his book "The Simple Case for Socialism" envisages Socialism as four closely connected things viz. (1) Human fellowship, (2) a social system in which the distinction of the rich and poor does not exist, (3) common ownership and the use of all the means of production, (4) an obligation to work according to each individual's capacity in creating common welfare.

The Socialists contend that all wealth is the product of labour. Exchange of commodities does not create any value. Land has value only if it is associated with man's actual or potential labour. Every man must live by labour. The resources of nature are vast. The needs of all men can be amply supplied if private property is abolished and exploitation is stopped. The means of production, distribution, and exchange should be socialised, in the interest of all. Such a collective organisation, it is contended, will abolish poverty and promote the cultural advancement of all men, without distinction.

The Russian Experiment

Russia is the first country to make an experiment on the above lines. Its history in the last twenty years has been the subject of the greatest criticism. It has set ablaze the whole capitalistic world. Most lurid pictures of Russian autocracy, Godlessness, anarchy and misery have been portrayed. In fact, Communism is associated with all that is dark and anarchial. In the midst of a plethora of vile and insidious publications, it is a relief to turn to the pages of independent writers, who not swayed by prejudice, have admitted courageously the great improvements, both social and economical that the Revolution has wrought in Soviet Russia.

"Soviet Communism—A New Civilisation" by Sidney and Beatrice Webb is a volume, of considerable merit, giving a true picture of the state of affairs, as witnessed by the authors, who travelled extensively in Russia with a view to collate all facts and figures and examine and sift every bit of evidence on the

subject. This book has been followed by another "Red Medicine" by Sir Arthur Newsholm and John A Kingsbury—eminent surgeons, who were deputed by the Milbank Memorial Fund, to study the subject of socialised health in Russia, and who corroborate in fact, nearly all the statements made by their predecessors, the octogenerians—Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

It should be worth-while to compare and study the Soviet system, which has raised Russia from its backwardness to a state of comparative prosperity and enlightenment never known before.

The Red Revolution

We are not writing this with the idea that India or any other country of the world must follow blindly the example of Soviet Russia and copy the methods employed by that country to achieve its object. That Lenin had to resort to a reign of terror, that the iron heel, the mailed fist and the red pistol were more in evidence than any honey-suckle flowers, no one would deny. Violence was the only method known to the Bolsheviks and this was used against all those who protested against the New System—the New Plan. If it caused rivers of blood to flow and those famines which temporarily blasted the hope of Soviet Russia's rejuvenation,—those unfortunately were then the necessary steps—the dangers and pitfalls fully expected, in the transition stage. They are now past. The country is wedded to a life of peace and amity. There is material prosperity, economic freedom, cultural advancement and political enfranchisement unheard of before in the history of Russia.

The Vast Expanse of Russia

Russia is 150 times as large as England and Wales and more extensive than U. S. A. and Canada combined. It comprises 1/6th of the land surface of the earth and its population is nearly 170 millions. In winter, it is practically a land-locked empire. Its only out-let is from the Arctic Ocean. Its passage from the Baltic and Black Sea is dependent upon the good-will of its neighbours. Such being its geographical aloofness, it would have been easy for the Capitalistic world to shut up and throttle Russia and its Socialistic dreams. It is really therefore most surprising and admirable, that situated as she is, inspite of world antagonism and its tremendous internal difficulties of dealing with a heterogeneous mass of 180 different nationalities in various stages of civilisation, with different cultures and traditions, it could coalesce all the disintegrating forces and evolve a system wherein the Turk, the Armenian, the Russian, the Tartar, the Ukranian and the Georgian, play a common part without any clash of nationalism. There is no nationalism in Russian ideology. It is a classless society, in which citizens are knit together like members of a great brother-hood.

CHAPTER II

MAN AS CITIZEN

EVERY constitution is dependent upon certain declarations of rights. On 10th July 1918, Lenin made the following declaration, at the Third All Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies:—

1. Russia is declared a republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' deputies. All central and local authority is vested in Soviets.

2. The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the basis of a free union of free nations, as a federation of national Soviet republics.

3. Within the fundamental aim of suppressing all exploitation of man by man, of abolishing for ever the division of society into classes, of ruthlessly suppressing all exploiters, of bringing about the socialist organisation of society and the triumph of socialism in all countries, the Third All Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' deputies further decrees:—

(a) "In order to establish the socialisation of land, private ownership of land is abolished; all land is declared national property and is handed over to the labouring masses, without compensation, on the basis of an equal division giving the right of use only.

(b) All forests, underground mineral wealth, waters of natural importance, all live-stock and appurtenances, together with all model farms and agricultural enterprises are proclaimed national property.

(c) As the first step towards the complete transfer of factories, workshops, mines, railways and other means of production and of transport, to the ownership of workers' and peasants' Soviet Republics and in order to ensure the supremacy of the labouring masses over the exploiters, the Congress ratifies the Soviet Law of Workers' Control of Industry and that of the Supreme Economic Council."

Object of the Soviet Constitution

The chief aim and object of the Soviet Constitution is "to direct and determine the economic life of the U. S. S. R. by the state plan of national economy for the purpose of increasing the public wealth, of steadily raising the material and cultural level of the toilers and of strengthening the independence of the U. S. S. R. and its power of defence." (Article 11 of the Soviet Constitution).

Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

1. Work.

The rights and duties of the citizens are laid down in chapter IX of the Soviet Constitution. The citizens have more rights than duties. Of all the obligations, the fore-most is that of work. It is for the individual to offer himself for work and the state guarantees his employment, according to his capacity. The article 118 says "Citizens of the U. S. S. R. have the right to work i.e. the right to guaranteed employment and payment of their work in accordance with its quantity and quality." The principle, "He who does not work, neither shall he eat" is rigidly enforced.

2. *Rest & Leisure.*

The Soviet Government recognises the necessity of rest and leisure, and the article 119 of the constitution ensures to its citizens these rights. The working day for the over-whelming majority of the workers is reduced to seven hours. Those who are in dangerous occupations, have only six hours of work to perform in a day. There is provision for annual vacations with pay. A wide net-work of rest homes, sanatoria, clubs, etc. is provided by the state for the workers.

3. *Social Insurance.*

Another privilege of the citizen is social insurance. "Every citizen has the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness or loss of capacity to work." A complete system of medical service of which we shall speak later on, is provided for the workers. The expense of social insurance is met by the state.

4. *Education.*

Another right of the citizens is free education. We shall speak of it in the later pages.

5. *Equality of rights to women.*

The equality of woman's rights with man's is another feature of the Soviet constitution. In all spheres of activity, social, political, economic and cultural, women have equal rights and privileges. We shall elaborate on the subject later on

6. *Equality of Rights without distinction of Nationality.*

The indefeasible right of the citizens to be treated equally, irrespective of race or nationality, is enunci-

ated in article 123 of the constitution. "Advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred or contempt, is punishable by law." Nationalism is completely dissociated from the idea of the state. Its dissociation from the state is the secret of success of the Soviet administration. It has led to the emancipation of many backward races and given them a front position.

The Tartars

The rapid progress of the Tartars, after the revolution may be cited as an example. Hardly 15 per cent of the Tartar population, before the revolution were literate. In 1934, 94 per cent were literate. In the Tartar Soviet Socialist Republic, not only is the education free and compulsory, but all the avenues of social reform are open. The women have thrown off their veils. They hold equal positions with men, in all spheres of service. Special hospitals, medical colleges, schools and other colleges abound in Kazan, the capital seat of the republic. Most of those practising as doctors are women. A flourishing state publishing house pours out a continuous stream of Tartar books and journals. Tartar theatres and cinemas, Tartar public libraries and museums, Tartar Art Galleries and Cultural Parks predominate, in the Tartar Republic as in other republics of the Union.

7. *Adult Franchise and Other Rights.*

Among the other rights of the citizens are, adult franchise, irrespective of sex or race, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembling and holding demonstrations, inviolability of person and home.

All persons above the age of eighteen have the right to vote, without any kind of restriction. There are certain classes who are debarred from the right of voting and other civic rights in the U. S. S. R. They are *Kulaks*, priests, traders, employers, adherents of the old Tsarist regime and all those who are opposed to Soviet Communism, in principle. The percentage of this prohibited group is now very small, as it will be difficult to find a single landlord or capitalist who subsists by employment of labour in any form. Hire of labour is a penal offence. We are reminded of the story of an American business man, who happened to boast to his guide, when visiting the Soviet Union, that he employed several thousands of men in his various enterprises. "The guide, not accustomed to such a situation was unable to hide her dismay. 'People get ten years for that in this country,' she said." (Pat Sloan—Soviet Democracy, page 43.)

8. *Freedom of Conscience.*

Article 124 of the constitution gives freedom of conscience to all its citizens. The church in the U. S. S. R. is separated from the state and the school from the church. The article says, "Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens." We shall consider this aspect in the later pages.

9. *The Duty of Observing the Rules of the Soviet Constitution.*

The articles 130 and 131 of the constitution enjoin upon all the citizens the duty of abiding by the constitution of the U. S. S. R. "to observe the laws, to

maintain labour discipline, to perform public duties honestly and to respect the rules of Socialist human intercourse" They are also enjoined "to safeguard and fortify public socialist property, as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system as the source of wealth and might of the country as the source of the prosperous and cultured life of all the toilers."

Treason

To defend the Father-land is the duty of every citizen but "Violation of the oath, desertion to the enemy, impairing of the military power of the state and espionage" constitute according to article 133, grave acts of treason and are known as the worst of crimes. The activities of the secret police agency known as the OGPU—an establisment which has now been abolished and whose work has been transferred to the Commissar of Home Affairs—we will have an opportunity to discuss in the later pages.

Constitution of the U. S. S. R.

Let us now take a glance at the frame-work of the constitution of the U. S. S. R. The Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics is a federated state composed of the following Soviet republics:—

1. The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.
2. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.
3. The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.
4. The Azerbaidjan Soviet Socialist Republic.
5. The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic.

6. The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic.
7. The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic.
8. The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic.
9. The Tadjik Soviet Socialist Republic.
10. The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic.
11. The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic.

The Union has various powers as under:—

(a) To make treaties with other states.

(b) To organise defence.

(c) To make war or peace.

(d) To organise foreign trade.

(e) To determine plans of national economy of the U. S. S. R.

(f) To approve of budgets.

(g) To administer banks, industrial and agricultural establishments and trading enterprises of all Union importance.

(h) To organise transport and communications.

(i) To direct the monetary and credit systems.

(j) To organise state insurance.

(k) To contract and grant loans.

Each Union Republic has its own constitution drawn up in conformity with the constitution of the U. S. S. R. Each Union Republic has the right to secede from the Union.

The Legislative power of the U. S. S. R. is exercised exclusively by what is known as the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. It consists of two chambers,

(1) the Soviet of the Union and (2) the Soviet of Nationalities. The former is elected by the citizens of the U. S. S. R. according to the electoral areas on the basis of one deputy for every 3,00,000 of the population. The latter is elected by the citizens of the U. S. S. R. according to Union and Autonomous Republics, Autonomous Regions and National Areas, on the basis of 25 deputies from each Union Republic, eleven deputies from each Autonomous Republic, five deputies from each Autonomous Region and one deputy from each National Area. Both the Chambers have equal rights, and are elected for four years. Both have equal rights to initiate legislation and a law is deemed to have been enacted if passed by both Chambers.

The Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. when it deems necessary, appoints commissions of inquiry and investigation into any matter.

The executive power of the Union is vested in the Council of People's Commissars. It is responsible to the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. The various departments entrusted to the Sovnarkom (Cabinet Ministers) are:—

1. Foreign Affairs.
2. Defence.
3. Foreign Trade.
4. Means of Communication.
5. Heavy Industries.
6. Light Industries.
7. River Transport.
8. Post, Telegraphs and Radio.

9. Forests.
10. Agriculture.
11. State Farms.
12. Food Industry.
13. Internal Trade.
14. Finance.
15. Internal Affairs.

Justice

Justice in the U. S. S. R. is administered by the Supreme Court of the U. S. S. R., the Supreme Court of the Union Republic, and other Territorial and Autonomous Regions and Republics and the People's Courts. The Supreme Court of the U. S. S. R. is the highest judicial organ. Cases are heard in public and the accused is guaranteed the right of defence. The judges are independent and are subject only to law. The Procurator is one of the highest officials and is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. to supervise the execution of the laws.

The administration of law in the U. S. S. R. except for political offences is very humane. No man can be placed under arrest except by the decision of a court, and with the sanction of the Procurator. When a person is suspected of any crime or breach of the rules, he is privately interrogated and a searching enquiry and examination is carried out by the Procurator's department. If they are convinced, that the person under investigation has committed the crime, then and then only, orders are issued for his arrest and trial by a competent court.

The Soviet System

Russia like India, is a country of villages. And with a view to the lowest peasant being initiated in the principles of government, each one of the 70,000 villages in the country, has a council. The village Soviet is an important government organ. It not only discusses questions pertaining to the welfare of the village, but it has the right of electing members to higher councils. The electors are summoned to attend, not as residents, within a certain area, but as persons employed in a particular factory, farm or any institution. In most of the democratic countries of the world, the method of representation is based on territorial or geographical constituencies. Factories, villages, co-operatives, trade unions,—these are the economic and social units for the purpose of representation in the U. S. S. R.

The village Soviet is the soul of the village. Every election is contested, which shows the depth of public interest and the main object of the system is to make the people take a live interest in the administration of all their affairs. They are given the freedom to err, as every decision arrived at either in the village Soviet or the city Soviet, which is a higher council, is subject to veto by higher authorities and bodies. It used to be Lenin's watch word, "The time is ripe for every servant girl, while she is still in the kitchen, to learn how to govern Russia."

Each city soviet appoints various committees, with whom are associated a great number of volunteers of both sexes. The members of these committees spend a considerable portion of their leisure hours in doing

detailed administrative work, which in America, England and other capitalist countries is carried out by a paid staff of inspectors, investigators, school attendance officers, relieving officers, collectors or deputy collectors.

As explained in an earlier pages, the directly elected primary soviets, besides governing their own areas, choose deputies or delegates for the higher congresses of the soviets governing larger areas. These larger soviets besides administering the affairs of their own districts, send deputies to yet higher councils and these again ultimately send their representatives to constitute the All Union Congress of Soviets. The whole administrative system is thus like a pyramid, the village and city soviets forming the base, the Rayon and Oblast—the larger soviets, forming the next upper layer, till the apex is reached represented by the All Union Congress of Soviets. The keynote of the whole Soviet system is not only individual responsibility but "universal, ubiquitous, collective responsibility. Every institution in the U. S. S. R. from the village soviet (Selosoviet) to the cabinet (Sovnarkom) is collectively responsible for fulfilling all its functions and even for the success of all its enterprises."

Taxation

The Commissar of Finance has many portfolios. These are (a) budget (b) currency (c) state revenue (d) taxation (e) eonomics and finance (f) control and audit (g) local finance (h) central administration (i) state insurance (j) notes and currency issue.

The revenue from various sources in the U. S. S. R. is paid into one single treasury in charge of the People's

Commissar of Finance. The entire expenditure of the state both of the Soviet Union and of the separate republic is met from this treasury. The State Bank has two thousand branches spread all over the country.

Private enterprise is heavily taxed and large incomes and inheritances are drastically assessed for taxation. The mass is exempted from any direct taxation. Nearly all industries are now state owned. Every factory and collective farm is made to pay to the state a certain percentage according to its output. The indirect taxation includes excise duty on alcoholic drinks, tobacco, undesirable luxuries, and stamps on legal transactions.

Universal Military Service

Article 132 of the Constitution says "Universal Military service is a law. Military service in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army is an honourable duty of the citizens of the U. S. S. R."

As on the continent of Europe, there is conscription in the U. S. S. R. but this conscription is not unpopular. Only sons of peasants and workers can aspire to become members of the Red Army, others being severely excluded. To be in the army is considered a great honour and privilege, as the whole military organisation in the U. S. S. R. is for the purpose of defence, Communism being opposed to any kind of foreign aggression. When Trotsky was in power, he held the highest post directing the military machine (1918-23). The defence forces in the U. S. S. R. in all the three departments,—air, land, and sea—number about nine million men. The air force especially is considered to be exceptionally formidable and the

U. S. S. R. has the reputation of being to-day one of the foremost aerial powers in the world.

The most noticeable trait of the Red Army is, that it is a school of both citizenship and culture. Men are not only well fed, well drilled, but the utmost care is taken to train them and educate them so that they may discharge their duties as citizens and be instrumental in advancing cultural activities, everywhere. Service for the infantry is for two years, three years are required for service in the air force and five years for the navy.

In Europe, especially in Germany, the military forms a distinct caste. In the U. S. S. R. it is not so. The members of the Red Army, take part as citizens in all elections. They form their own committees of management and carry on correspondence with their relatives in the villages. All ranks address each other as equals. On the parade ground, strict discipline is maintained and obedience to orders is enforced. But off duty, there is no distinction between commanders and the members of the rank and file. Libraries are attached to every military station and the greatest impetus is given to cultural advancement. All the men are taught to sing or play one or two musical instruments. Whenever necessity arises, the troops are called out to help, not only in agricultural operations, but also in industrial work requiring help, such as the repairing of roads and bridges, railways and embankments. The Red Army in the U. S. S. R. is a tremendous source of social and cultural service — a factor most conspicuous by its absence, in the capitalist states.

The Ogpu

The chief objective of the constitution is to abolish exploitation. Those opposed to Socialism are held as enemies of the State. They are not only disfranchised. They can not participate in any of the activities and amenities provided by the Soviet law for the millions of its citizens. Private employment of labour with a view of making profit out of its hire is strictly prohibited. Buying with a view to selling at a higher price is also an offence punishable under law. To praise any foreign economic system, opposed to Socialism is held almost as treason. Punishment for disloyalty to the Communistic State differs from that meted out to other offenders. And in engineering persecution of political offenders, the OGPU, the secret police force of the U. S. S. R., plays a most important part. It was organised primarily "to maintain the revolution" by suppressing all counter revolutionary activities.

The term "counter revolutionary activities" being too vague, it was natural, that all sorts of offences, trivial or grave were dealt with by this secret police agency, with a terror and revenge, which are familiarly associated with the doings of this secret body. Those in correspondence, even most innocently, with Russian emigrants abroad were suspected and treated scandalously. Any resistance to the policy of government at that time, was held as treason and the machinery of the Ogpu was moved to hound the offender to death and destruction. The tortures inflicted upon its victims by this Ogpu recall the terrors and horrors of the Spanish Inquisition. "There is something ghastly in its inveterate secretiveness, even down

to the detail of making all its arrests in the dead of night" so confess even the warm admirers of Soviet Russia—Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

But when we turn to the constructive side of the Ogpu's activities, we are given considerable cause for relief. The prison reforms in the U. S. S. R. have been carried out to such an extent that crime and beggary have been considerably reduced, if not entirely abolished. Prisons have been changed into reformatories, for re-conditioning human lives and the convicts when they leave the prison houses after expiry of their sentences settle down to peaceful avocations like law abiding citizens.

It is said that the huge enterprise of building a water way from Leningrad to the White Sea, involving engineering skill of the highest type was entrusted to the Ogpu. They undertook to get it executed with the aid of prison labour. The convicts were marshalled out in gangs and were made to work in socialistic competition. They had been trained to aspire to make themselves useful in life and the opportunity was seized by them and they joyfully gave their best and achieved a success, which no doubt redounds to their credit. When the work was completed a great number of them were rewarded and released. It was not merely an engineering success. It was a triumph in "human regeneration."

CHAPTER III

VARIOUS MASS ORGANISATIONS IN THE U.S.S.R.

WE have hitherto dwelt upon man as a citizen, in the U. S. S. R. Let us now consider the other aspect of man, as a producer. There are various mass organisations, each extending from one end of the country to the other, forming a sort of a "proletarian apparatus of a federal constitution rendering it both supple and effective." First of all there are trade unions, in which workers of all trades and industries are united, for furthering the cause of Communism. Secondly there are the soviets, the mass organisations of those who work in town and country. Thirdly there are the co-operatives of all kinds and lastly there is the Communist Party, whose chief function is to unify the work of the various organisations and guide their activities, towards the single end, viz. the liberation of the proletariat.

Trade Unions

The Trade Union in the U. S. S. R. plays a most significant part in the working of the constitution of the country. A very large number of workers is enrolled in Trade Union membership, which indicates its importance. It is said that the Trade Unon membership in the U. S. S. R. exceeds the total number of members of all the Trade Unions of the rest of the world. In the Capitalist countries of the world, the Trade Union functions as a sort of hostile body, inimical to the employers, the interests of the employer and the employed being always opposed to each other. There is no motive governing the Trade Union

other than reducing the number of hours of work, increasing the wages for the worker and asking for a higher standard of living for the workers irrespective of other considerations regarding the general interest of the trade or industry concerned.

The trade unions in the U. S. S. R. assume a more important role. They are not in diametrical opposition to any organisation in the state. Their function is rather to co-operate. They meet to chalk out the lines of action whereby out-put can be increased to the maximum extent. They meet to find out what should be the fair share of wages, to be distributed, after voluntarily agreeing to payment of such taxes and proportions of income, as are necessary for the building up of the Socialist state in all its ramifications,—its defence, its law courts, its amenities, its huge staff for carrying out the state administration, in all the departments and activities of life.

There is no collective bargaining, no fight against any body, for there is no profit-making organisation in the U. S. S. R. The absence of an enemy party is the chief feature of the Soviet Trade Unionism. The members meet together to fix a socialised wage, arrived at after deducting expenses ear-marked for the state.

The factory has come to occupy a most important place in the life of the worker. It not only provides him with a fair wage, but arranges for his dwelling and gives him and his family the benefit of all those amenities, which are so necessary for his well-being, The Trade Union's policy being allied with the teachings of Communism, its efforts in advancing the cause

of the workers and their well-being, is in consonance with the requirements of the state as a whole. If work is held as a paramount duty of every citizen; his right to rest and recreation is also recognised and considerable attention is paid by the Trade Union for the maintenance of an efficient system of health, and in providing means of recreation for all its members without any distinction. One is astounded at the measure of freedom that is enjoyed by the Trade Union in shouldering its responsibilities,—whether it be in the allocation and exaction of work, the distribution of wages, erection of dwellings, provision of nurseries, creches, kindergartens, maternity homes, rest and culture parks, journals and libraries, schools, colleges, gymnasiums, sports, theatres, clubs, and rest homes for all its member workers, whether men or women, without distinction of any nature.

The following remark of an American observer, referred to by Sidney and Beatrice Webb in their book "Soviet Communism—A New Civilisation" page 193, are of interest:—

"The Trade Union 'fabkom' is a growing force in the Soviet Union. It brings workers not only into the unions, but into the whole economic activity of the country. It is the principal organ of workers' democracy in a government and an industrial system operated by and for workers. In no other country does this type of workers' council have so much of power. In no other country does it have such varied and important functions. No where do its members have so much freedom and responsibility as in the U. S. S. R. It acts as the fundamental contact point through which

the worker begins to take part in factory as well as in social life, to exercise his rights as a worker in this community, and to participate in building up the nationalised industries."

The State Farm

Russia, like India, is an agricultural country. If the factory forms an unit for the purpose of representation of government and for the furtherance of social and cultural advancement, the farm whether "state," "collective" or "co-operative," also has an important place and forms an unit of government. Before the revolution, the land was cultivated by the Russian *Mujik.* He paid rent and taxes to the landlord and after these exactments, there was not enough left to maintain himself and his family. Illiterate, steeped in superstition, unskilled and untrained in the art of scientific cultivation, the Russian peasant, was known all over Europe, as the most unproductive agriculturist. The *Kulaks*, who owned lands and cultivated them, by oppressing the village labourer were not so miserable. Extreme individualism and the primitive conditions of Russian agriculture were a problem and Lenin started to improve the situation by declaring all agricultural land as state property and parcelling out the entire land into some millions of peasant-proprietorships. The greed of the peasant holder led him to till the land entirely for his own gain, and he tended to be reluctant to part with any portion of his produce for the up-keep of the state.

Stalin recently introduced a new agricultural policy to stop this eternal seesaw between the desires of the peasants and the state. The tiny peasant

holdings were merged into large collective farms. The toilers were made to work, aided and assisted by men from the state farms, who taught them to till with tractors, supplied by government. The method of agriculture was entirely changed. No longer was the wooden rustic plough used. The tractor took its place. Scientific agriculture was enforced. At near distances, workshops were opened by the State for the training of hundreds and thousands of peasants in the art of scientific agriculture by means of tractors and other scientific implements. These workshops or machine and tractor stations, as they were called, carried out the work of manufacturing and repairing tractors and supplying them and giving service to all the collective farms, in their vicinity.

The policy of collective farming which required the peasants to give a certain quota of the produce on the farm, raised by their united hands, to the State by way of taxation in exchange for the services rendered by the State in the shape of supplying free tractors etc. was however opposed. The innate human acquisitiveness, more commonly found in the conservative tiller of the soil—a characteristic not only of the Russian peasant but of the peasant tillers all over the world,—egged on by the disloyal elements in the population, became the active source of a great menace. The so-called 'famine' of 1930-31 was caused not by the failure of the crop in those years but by the deliberate failure on the part of peasants to sow weed, thrash, and warehouse whatever grain was grown. this widespread general strike of the peasantry was however eventually over-come by employing stern measures

and to-day Russia presents an example of most successful industrialised agriculture, never known at any previous period of its history. Not only has the peasantry been reformed and uplifted but the country-side has awakened to a state of rural abundance and prosperity, never experienced before.

Various Kinds of Collective Farms

There are various kinds of collective farms in Soviet Russia. The Bolsheviks are practical politicians and in overcoming the difficulties with the peasants, they had to sift their policy, according to the occasion and the tempo of the people. The most elementary type of collective farming consists of peasants co-operating only at the time of the harvests and at other times when there is special work to be done. Another type of collective farming is when the peasants live separately in their own dwellings, but own their tools, machines and farm-lands in common. The third and most effective and perfect type of collective farming consists in the members, not only farming together and owing every thing in common, but living together in a communal house.

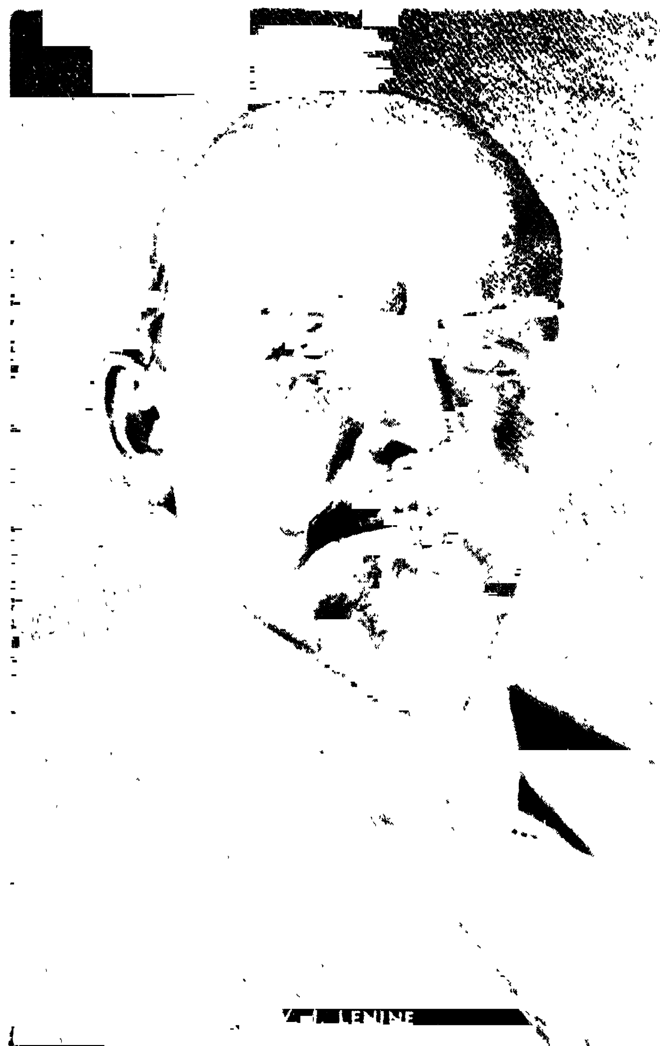
The worker in a collective farm, earns about twenty-four roubles a month and pays nine roubles a month for his food and lodging. This leaves him fifteen roubles, for personal expenses. The unskilled city worker earns not less than eighty roubles a month, but he pays more than his rustic brother, as much as sixty-five roubles for his maintenance, thus getting not more than fifteen roubles for personal expenses—a system of economics wisely and astutely worked out by the Soviet Government.

The most distinctive trait of collective farming is that no distinction is made between race and creed. Every one is welcome, whether he be a Cossack, a Jew, or a Mongolian.

There is a vein of aversion running throughout the pages of Crichton's book "Russian Close-Up" against Soviet Communism, but in presenting an undistorted view of the state of affairs, he could not help coming to the conclusion, "the material comforts and methodical organisation of the farm (collective) were undoubtedly an improvement on any thing that had existed previously in Russia."

The Commune

The most complete and perfect type of collectivised farming in the U. S. S. R. is the Commune. There are about 2,000 communes in Russia. In a commune all the material possessions are owned together and all its activities are administered by a common management. A typical example is that of the settlement of the Finnish people in the North Caucasus province. They were attracted to Russia, as it offered them freedom from Capitalist oppression, in their own country (the U. S. A.), and they brought with them American agricultural machinery. They were given a hearty reception by Lenin. A piece of land admeasuring about 5,000 hectares (2½ acres make a hectre) was assigned to them in 1922, and, by 1935, the total population of the Commune numbered 1,000 comprising of 16 different nationalities, who had constructed substantial buildings for dwellings, sunk wells, built barns, opened nurseries and schools and brought under cultivation more than 10,000 acres of


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land. They sold grain annually to the Government Grain Trust, according to the quota fixed. Each year has witnessed the growth of this Commune, every member of which shared every thing in common.

Sharing the Results

Sidney and Beatrice Webb describe the working of a *Kolkhos*, in the Middle Volga region, which is a typical instance and it is interesting. The figures quoted are for 1932, when this particular collective farm was started. It consisted of 234 families. A total crop of 619 tons was raised by this colony out of which 227 tons of grain were sold to the government. The total net monetary income of this collective farm, from the sale of grain to government and other parties was fifty thousand roubles. The disbursements were as under:—

	roubles.
Agricultural taxes	1,750
Insurance	1,700
Repayment of loan to State Bank ..	3,300
10% of the gross income carried to common fund account for capital construction on the farm	7,000
4% of the gross income for amenities and cultural purposes	2,800
For purchase of materials from the Tractor and Incubator Centre ..	2,000
Kerosene and lubricating oil for tractors, for repairs and sundry expenses	4,000
Total	22,550

The net gain after meeting the above outgoings was about 27,000 roubles, in cash, as well as 185 tons of wheat, and a considerable quantity of other agricultural products. The authors state that calculating the number of working days, put forth at the end of the year at 34,500, the average income per working day was as under:—

78 kopeks in cash.

6·5 kilograms of grain.

2·0 kg of hay.

14 kg of straw and various other products.

Besides the above share the members cultivated their own gardens and kept their cattle which brought them an additional income.

The above illustration is purposely cited to show how much India the poorest country in the world, could benefit if a system of collective farming on rational lines, with the aid and assistance of government experts and model farm organisations were to be introduced. The peasantry groans heavily under the Jagarnath debt of more than 1000 crores of rupees. What a mighty transformation could be effected in the social, cultural and economic condition of the rural people by introducing changes on the above lines.

Russia has solved its food problem, so effectively by the employment of scientific methods of agriculture, on a socialised basis, that it is able to export to foreign countries, particularly to England a very good quantity of grain after meeting the demand for home consumption. This is an ideal policy for a country,

which on account of its policy of socialism, antagonistic to the world at large, has to be self-sufficient, in every respect, in case it be suddenly isolated by political happenings from all intercourses with the outside world.

CHAPTER IV

PLANNING

"LIFE'S reach should exceed its grasp" is the maxim, that is practised by the Soviet Government, as demonstrated by the feverish heat with which its periodic plans for economic achievements are pushed forth. Sidney and Beatrice Webb write "The practice in the U. S. S. R. is for the government, each year to ask from the community rather more than can objectively be expected from it and to do this deliberately as a means of inducing the people to stretch themselves to the utmost."

The first Five Years' Plan of Soviet Russia was conceived with a view to adequately equip the State against any attack by the Capitalist countries of the world, and this necessarily led to the concentration of all activities to the "opening of new mines, oil-fields, hydro-electric plants, iron and steel works, the construction of strategic railways and the doubling of railway tracks through economically undeveloped districts and generally on a rapid expansion of the heavy industries, to ensure that munitions can be made and troops easily transported, instead of seeking directly to increase the making of the house-hold commodities desired by the people." Even today inspite of the rapid industrialisation, the peasants and the factory workers have not enough household commodities. There is considerable shortage of manufactured boots. The defence of the country and the education of the people being the first charge upon the State, its activities in the first instance, have been

in these directions. The greatest importance being paid to technical and every other kind of education, each year of the plan witnesses, more schools and colleges, more teachers and professors, more scientific researchers and inventors, more opportunities for exploration and investigation. The money that is spent like water, on scientific researches and inventions and explorations should cause the envy of every country of the world. It is the conviction of Soviet Russia, that in the harnessing of nature by means of scientific research alone, can the Utopia of material prosperity be achieved. The advantages of Planned Economy as envisaged by a Communistic state are described by Sidney and Beatrice Webb as under:—

"When it comes to the wider aspects of efficiency of securing rationalisation of industry, agriculture, transportation and distribution in the interest of widest social well-being, the Socialist economy has certain natural advantages. It is not limited by the demands of profit nor hampered by private property rights. It has not to support any idle class, neither at the bottom nor at the top. It suffers now but little from sabotage and has no bill of costs for long strikes. Against this must be set the waste from inefficiency bureaucratism. But this will have to be enormous to effect the other savings. In addition, a planned economy can secure the most productive distribution of credit. It can build the biggest and best equipped enterprises. It can use its machinery upto the operating point of the law of diminishing returns. Allowing for that, the Soviet Union can use its agricultural machinery 100 per cent, the United States of America only forty per cent. Also a planned economy permits,

for the first time, a scientific development of natural resources. In the oil-fields, for example, the spacing of the wells, at proper intervals, according to the stratum being followed, is in striking contrast to that of the older wells, which are sometimes close together on either side of a boundary line in order to tap a competitor's flow. Similarly, a national plan for agriculture enables distribution of crops on a scientific basis according to soil and climate. Underneath all this, as the enabling fact, and therefore a steady stimulus to the greatest economic efficiency, is the new form of property, social ownership." (Soviet Communism. A New Civilisation, page 648.)

The chief idea involved in planning is to eliminate wastage. "There is no room in a planned economy for booms and slumps." The production of the whole State is planned according to its capacity and the people's requirements. There is no over-production as in profit-sharing countries, leading to slumps and a fall in prices. There is no production of unhygienic goods. If lipstick is pronounced as unhygienic, its production is stopped. The planned economy can not be affected by any crisis of currency or credit. It has nothing to do with the oscillations of foreign exchanges. There is no fear of bank failures; no panic of withdrawals.

The views of Barbara Woottan who makes a very happy contrast of the state of affairs in a planned economy with the system in vogue in the capitalist countries, are very interesting. In her book "Plan or no Plan" she writes: "The planned economic system has undoubtedly great potentialities. Wisely operated,

it has the power to steer clear at least of the cruder and more obviously deplorable disasters into which an unplanned economy habitually runs. If we have to admit that any criterion of full economic efficiency is highly elusive, then the next best thing to a certain achievement of such efficiency, is to avoid forms of inefficiency which are unmistakably judged by any criterion; and which in particular, since they undermine self-respect, are the cause of acute mental distress. And a planned economy, if it can not be sure of making the most economical use of all the human and material resources at its disposal, has, at least, a far better chance than an unplanned of finding some use for those resources which is reasonably satisfying to those who depend upon it for their living."

It is true that in spite of heroic efforts at planning, Soviet Russia's achievement at the end of the 1st Five-Year Plan was still, in actual out-put, far behind that of countries like Germany, Great Britain and America —though the rate of her industrial expansion was entirely without precedent. Even in the field of electrification, which had a place of honour in Lenin's programme of industrialisation, (it used to be his slogan, Socialism is equal to Soviet power plus electrification) Soviet Russia could not come up to Germany's level. When it aimed to raise its electrical capacity from 11¼ to 42½ thousand million kilowatt hours, Germany's capacity was 60½ thousand million. But, as put by Barbara Wootton, "the consequence that arise from the particular background in which the planned system is being tried out must not of course be confused with effects and possibilities of the system itself."

As we shall notice later on, at the time when the first Five Year Plan was tried in Soviet Russia, the essential condition of skilled labour in that country was conspicuous by its absence and our wonder is that the country should have achieved so much in such a short span, under such adverse circumstances. That in itself speaks of the potentialities of planned economy.

Planned Economy—Its Supposed Impracticability

When the Soviet Government launched upon its career of planned economy, there was a wild hurricane of criticism, at the impracticability of its venture. The magnitude and complexity of the plan were derided. There are gigantic concerns like the Tata Iron & Steel Co. Ltd., in India, The United States Steel Corporation Ltd., The Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd., The General Electrical Corporation, The P. & O. Steam Navigation Co., The Canadian Pacific Railway Co. not to speak of the various concerns of Mr. Henry Ford, the American industrial leviathan. If these could be successfully managed, inspite of the hostility of rivals, why not a Socialised State which has not to face adverse factors of business rivalry, the ups and downs of prices, the uncertainty of demand and supply and huge expenditure on advertisements and other paraphernalia attached to a capitalistic way of selling and producing, including heavy insurance charges?

Is Soviet Russia a Slave State?

There is no slavery enforced by the plan, as mischievously alleged by Capitalism, which is based on the Christian ethical conception, "If a man do no work

neither shall he eat." The door of work is open to all. Each has to work according to his capacity. The atmosphere of work is made as pleasant as human ingenuity can devise.

There is a general impression that in the U. S. S. R. there is nothing but regimentation and drilling of all human life, which can not be but distasteful. An impartial survey should soon dispel this erroneous belief. Literally and truly speaking, a far greater amount of individual freedom is enjoyed by the Bolsheviks than by the majority of people in the Capitalist countries of the world.

The urge to work in our Capitalist system is profit. It is the basis and main lever of our activities. This system of profit allowing an individual the right to order things at his own sweet will has been the cause of privation and misery. Fear and insecurity of life have led not only individuals but nations to the adoption of measures, for the perpetuation of enslavement of the millions of toilers and workers. When a man enters a factory or a farm, what liberty of action has he? Is he not regimented and drilled to do a certain work, whether he likes it or not, just for small pittance? Outside this field of operation, is not his liberty further restricted by his poverty? Has he the free choice of housing, food, clothing, or recreation? Can the system that breeds poverty and misery for the millions ever be productive of freedom?

The only freedom enjoyed is by the class that owns property. But the fact is that no man even with property and capital is safe, on account of the

perplexing ups and downs caused by a system of government, that can not avert any catastrophic changes,—these being inherent in Capitalism. The desire and propensity to drive the nail harder for selfish protection, at the cost of the misery and enslavement of others follows naturaly and inevitably. Man's happiness is the highest freedom, this Soviet Russia claims without dispute. The national ownership and government control have not in the U. S. S. R. led to any killing of initiative nor have they reduced human endeavour to a dead monotony. By substituting service for profit, it has raised a new idealogy of collective good, a far greater inspiration for a better life. By dispelling insecurity, banishing poverty, ensuring employment for all, by making work obligatory on every man and woman, Communism in the U. S. S. R. has achieved a success, the measure of which we shall discuss in later pages.

Major Attlee says "Socialism is an expression of man's desire for freedom." Socialism recognises that human happiness is a continuous growth. Its objective is therefore to create such conditions of human progress, as to afford a scope to every individual for the fullest development, according to his ability. "It is no part of the Socialist idea that there should be in every human activity an orthodox pattern to which all must conform." (The Labour Party in Perspective, page 139.)

Lenin's indignant reply to the accusation that the Soviet Government was undemocratic and dictatorial, void of the semblance of individual freedom and liberty of the people, was as under:—

"Is there a single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the average rank-and-file worker, the average rank-and-file village labourer enjoys anything approaching such liberty as to hold meetings, in the best buildings, such liberty to use the best printing works and the largest stocks of paper, to express his ideas and protect his interests, such liberty to promote men and women of his own class to administer and to run the state as in Soviet Russia." (The Proletarian Revolution page 31.)

Coercion of the Consumer

Another attack levelled at the general plan is that the producing state, is dictatorial in regard to what tastes, the consuming public must have. The man in the street cannot purchase, from the market the article that suits his fancy or meets his requirements. If he is fond of velvet, no price will buy him that article, for it is not marketed by the Soviet Government. There is an eagerness in the Capitalist market, which is based on profit, to supply those goods, which are most in demand. Every whim and fancy of the consumer is catered for. The buyer is not coerced. His freedom of choice is not limited.

If there be any substance of truth in this criticism, it has to be noted that the freedom of choice in the purchase of goods is limited in the capitalist countries, to a very small minority of the extremely wealthy section of the community, who have the purchasing power to satisfy their whim and fancy. A man visiting London, would be dazed at the display of millions of different articles from the pincushion to the motor car in different varieties, colours, sizes, qualities to suit

different purposes. It is a free market no doubt and the choice is infinite. But what is the percentage of the people who can exercise the right of choice? Even in a country like England, considered one of the wealthiest countries of the world, it is said that about one third of the whole population, is habitually on the verge of starvation. What is the limit of freedom of a labourer's wife whose income does not exceed one or two pounds a week? She has to set aside the rent of the dwelling she occupies. She has to pay for her food, bus and tram fare and social insurance. What is then left of her income, that she can purchase in the open market except the barest of clothing and toilet? If we look to India, the condition of the average purchaser is much worse. The average income of an Englishman in England is said to be little more than £ 50/- a year. That of an Indian is not more than one and half annas pcr day i. e. about Rs. 35/- a year, not even £ 3/- per annum.

What purchasing capacity beyond a scrap of cloth to hide nudity and a few scanty meals to fill the hollow of a stomach, the plodding millions in India, have, living in mud huts, in the desert and the swamp, in rain, cold, and heat, in dirt and disease, uncared for and unthought of? It is a cruel mockery to say that Capitalism offers a greater freedom of choice.

The Substitute for "Profit" in Soviet Russia

Profit is the greatest incentive to work in a Capitalist state of society. In Soviet Russia, it is otherwise. The sport instinct, the sense of public shame and honour, intellectual curiosity, joy and perfection in

work, zeal for social service—these take the place of profit. Sidney and Beatrice Webb elaborate this point in the following eloquent passage in the course of their book "Soviet Communism—A New Civilisation" page 700:—

"The Communist remotivation of wealth production has involved first the remoulding of the old incentive of pecuniary self-interest, so as to harmonise it with welfare of the community as a whole; and secondly the discovery and application of additional incentives, by bringing into play, among the masses of workers and peasants, for the purpose of increasing the productivity of labour, new motives hitherto unexplored. There is for instance the desire on the part of individuals and groups of individuals to measure themselves against others in trials of skill and endurance and thus display their superiority. This may be termed the sports instinct. Then there are the sanctions of public honour and public shame. Higher in the scale of moral values stand the stimuli of the intellectual curiosity and of joy in perfected craftsmanship; and above all, the zeal for social service, irrespective of any special recognition, leading to sustained inconspicuous toil and even acts of heroism."

Evils of Production in a Capitalist State

The variety of production is necessarily restricted, but the quality is not sacrificed, as it is in the case of a Capitalist country, where competition plays a most prominent part. H. G. Wells is not a blind admirer of Soviet policy but he discusses with an open mind the grave disadvantages of Capitalist production. When the sole inducement is profit and not service, it gives

rise to competition of an unhealthy character. Who is not aware of frauds, dishonesty, bribery and corruption, in the daily course of business? Who is not aware of the methods employed by the Carnegies and the Rock fellers, the oil and steel magnates of America, in acquiring their untold wealth? One has only to delve into the pages of Wells to get an idea of the unscrupulous ways of the rich, by which they pile their wealth. Who is not aware of the repulsive things that are being daily done, in the adulteration of food, in spite of strict food laws?

H. G. Wells gives a picture of a firm selling, with impunity, what they described as "Pure Fruit Juice and Sugar only." The container had a resplendent label of a large yellow lemon, to entice people to think that the juice was of fresh lemon. The trade rules permit substitutes being used and the manufacturer took resort as under. The substitute for fruit is Citric Acid. The substitute for Citric Acid is Tartaric Acid. And the Tartaric Acid that is sold in the commerciau quantities is more Phosphoric Acid than any thing. The chemical examination proved that the fruit juice was in reality not fruit but glucose mixed with a large percentage of Phosphoric Acid and this refreshing drink was sold in the market as pure fruit juice.

Wells gives us an insight into the various qualities and grades of Jam, in the market.

"The first quality jam for the British Market need not have more than fifty per cent of fruit, nor the second quality more than 20 per cent. The fruit may be brought from abroad in tubs with preservatives; it may be eaked out with any old vegetable pulp as an

acceptable substitute, the want of seeds in the pulp may be supplemented by the stale stock of the seedsman, it may be livened up with citric, tartaric and malic-acids and brightened up with any 'permitted' colouring matter, and there it is First Quality British Jam. What third quality Jam for the millions can be like, is known only in the deepest recesses of the British Food Manufacturers' Association." (Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind page 172.)

The mixture of chalk with lubricating grease is not adulteration. That is a most objectionable phrase. The manufacturers call it "loading" and the practice of the trade permits it, even in a country like England where honesty is supposed to be the hall-mark of every trader.

The following extract from A. W. Humphrey's book "The Modern Case for Socialism" (page 165) gives some further evidence of the frauds that continue despite legislation. "In spite of seventy-five years of inquiry, legislation and inspection, private enterprise, even today, is still often to be found cheating the consumer and putting harmful ingredients in his food; it is still unfit to be trusted and compells the community to pay for keeping a constant watch on it. The Annual Report of the Ministry of Health published in August 1926 revealed cases of flagrant adulteration. Of 11,201 samples of butter examined, 168 were found to be adulterated. Of the suet sold, flaked in packets one third was, in some cases not suet at all, but rice and flour. Eight percent of the samples of jam analysed were adulterated. In sweets, French chalk and Sulphur di oxide were found to have been

used to give a white or transparent appearance. A stock of 9000 Easter eggs had been condemned as containing quart glass, zinc copper and saw dust. Samples of sugar examined contained coal tar, dye, saw dust and ground rice."

The same author quotes Mr. Fred Needler the managing director of a confectionery firm, who is said to have stated at the annual meeting of the British Federation of Confectionery that "Many of the common sweets now on the market were not fit for human consumption and that much of the stuff sold as chocolate contained only three to five per cent of chocolate. The public would not eat the sweets if they knew what they contained. Manufacturers have been known to purchase sugar salvaged from the bottom of the sea and to make sweets of it for consumption by children." (Modern Case for Socialism, page 166).

Trade Frauds in India

One of the commonest practices in India, in spite of legislative checks and legal convictions is the adulteration of food and other articles. The pages of any newspaper bear ample testimony of the daily convictions of persons for such malpractices. It is quite ordinary to read such cases as under:—

"Two samples of tea taken from the godown of Messrs. L ...... H ...... & Co., at 224 Dongri Street, were on examination found to be non-genuine and injurious to health. The accused was fined Rs. 150/- for the offence by the presiding magistrate."

"R .... V .... owner of the shop at Bhiwankar Building, Gokhale Road, Bombay, was fined

₨ 200/- (or six months' jail) by the Municipal Court of Hon. Presidency Magistrates for selling ghee adulterated to the extent of 96·3 per cent." (Times of India, 2nd February, 1938.)

Dirt as an adulterant to grain and oilseeds is a common feature of Indian trade. It is said several lakhs of rupees are spent annually in transporting dirt, a considerable portion of which is deliberately adulterated to grain and oilseeds.

The actual producer often does not realise even twenty per cent of the value, which the consumer finally pays for the stuff, whether it be ghee, oil, grain, tea, vegetables or fresh fruit from the orchard. Such is the anomaly and complexity of the Capitalist system, which gives rise to fraud and corruption, because the main urge is profit.

Purity of the Soviet Market

In Soviet Russia, there is no competition fair or unfair. There is no exigency of the market—no uncertainty of the laws of demand and supply, when the government itself has the monopoly of production and distribution and its statistical department can tell clearly what are the wants of the people and how far they can be met. When there is no scramble for the market, manufacture must necessarily function so as to serve the interests of the consumer. Every producer is a consumer and every consumer is a producer. The society being so framed, the whole objective of manufacture is to improve the quality, as far as the economic conditions of the state permit. The definite orders of Stalin to all the factory managers are that the goods of the highest possible quality should be

made. The *Pravda* is an important news organ in the U. S. S. R. and the following extract from one of its issues bears on the present point. "Why all these Soviet efforts to improve conditions, build more factories, register technological progress, produce beautiful high quality goods? For the sake of the people, for the sake of the producers, the Soviet consumers, for the sake of our nation. No matter what product a plant makes, be it a lathe or a shoe, a turbine or a nail, it must always think of the human beings, of our Soviet citizens, of the millions of excellent builders of Socialism, who will use these articles." The criticism that planned economy and state ownership mean dictation to each individual in every detail of life that "Every body should wear brown suits, eat liver on Thursdays and beans on Fridays" is as ridiculous as it is untrue.

Collective Feeding

One of the most attractive features of Soviet production is collective feeding. Each factory has its own kitchen. It is difficult to decide whether to call it a factory kitchen or a kitchen factory, for the numbers of persons employed, and the numbers that avail themselves of its advantages are so large. Mr. M. R. Masani—one of the leaders of the Congress Socialist Party of India—gives a very interesting account of his experience in his "Soviet Side-Lights" published in 1935, after his second visit to that country in August 1934. He visited a kitchen attached to a metal factory. The three course mid-day meal cost him two roubles but to a factory worker, its cost, he says was 1·10 roubles. "This discrimination is one of

the many ways in which the worker is still treated as the favourite child of the Soviet Fatherland," says the author. The cleanliness, the great care to serve food in all its wholesomeness, the special attention to diet for sick people, for whom a department is maintained in charge of a special doctor, the laboratory where meat and fish, milk and butter are tested and their values in calories assessed and adjusted—these are some of the note worthy features of the Factory system of the Soviet. The remarks made by Mr. Masani in the Visitor's book, need reproduction here:—

"It has made me happy and sad, to visit this kitchen. Happy to see that the Russian workers are fed so well; sad that the workers in India still starve. *Such care and attention to the workers' food is only possible in a Socialist State.* That the man who produces food and wealth has a right to eat seems obvious to you; it is a proposition by no means accepted in the world outside the limits of the Workers' State."

CHAPTER V

THE COMMUNIST PARTY

ARTICLE 126 of the Constitution emphasises the right of the citizens to unite in public organisations, such as trade unions, co-operative associations, youth organisations, sport and defence organisations and cultural, technical and scientific organisations. At the apex of all these organisations, stands the Communist Party, which is the pick of the citizens, chosen with the express view of strengthening and developing the Socialist system. It is a great force and power in the state.

This party is opposed to religion. Wedded to the doctrines of pure materialism, any deviation from Marxism by any of its members, warrants immediate expulsion and disgrace. God-less as is its belief, it is very surprising how its members work, with a fervour surpassing that of most religious missionaries. They generally become the heads of various organisations of the toilers, whether in the factory or in the state or collective farm, teaching them, guiding them, inspiring them to achievements of higher and greater import, at every stage of progress. The rules of the party are so strictly followed, that every year, about two per cent of the members are eliminated, for breach of discipline, by local voting centrally controlled. This purge of the members of the Communist Party is a hardy annual.

The Party members number about three millions which corresponds to about two per cent of the adult

population of the U. S. S. R. Priests, merchants and traders are definitely excluded for the obvious reason that they can never conform to the principles, teachings and idealism of Socialism or Communism. The service in the shape of companionship and leadership, which this voluntarily recruited membership offers to the citizens of the U. S. S. R. is remarkable. It is no wonder if Stalin, the greatest man today in the U. S. S. R. should by official designation be no more than Secretary of this Communist Party. It is through this secretaryship that he controls and manages the whole machinery of the administration of the U. S. S. R. The following description of the Party by Sidney and Beatrice Webb is interesting:—

"The Communist Party in the U. S. S. R. in its structure and in some of its leading features, has a distinct semblance to the religious orders established in the past ages in connection with Buddhism, Christianity and other world-religions. It is literally outside the legal constitution of the secular state and professedly independent of it. It repudiates any national boundaries and claims a sphere that is world-wide and independent of nationality, race or colour. It is self-selective in its recruitment, in that it augments its membership exclusively by co-option. It is pyramid in form broadly democratic at the base, but directing its self-management from the top downwards. Its test for membership is fundamentally that of acceptance of an ideology of the nature of a creed, from which is evolved an exceptional code of conduct, not imposed on the ordinary citizen, which all its members must obey, the ultimate sanction being expulsion from membership. It has in substance though

not in name, a "holy writ," the authority and veracity of which must not be questioned, but which is subject, at all times, to authoritative interpretation. Of the intensity of faith of the Party and the strength of the devotion of its members, often leading to the greatest self-sacrifice and even martyrdom, no candid students can have any doubt. Finally it tends to erect one man as its head, who is nominally no more than an ordinary member and may not hold the highest or any office at all in the State, but who reaches the apex of the pyramid by popular acclamation, based on election, at first direct and afterwards, indirect; but who once chosen, is professedly the chief director and who becomes in time, practically irremovable by the membership." (Soviet Communism. Pages 413 and 414).

Other Youth Organisations

The Communist Party which is dominant in the country is closely linked up with various organisations of youth—the "Comsomols," the "Pioneers" and the "Octobrists." The Youth movement is gaining ground every where in the world today and it would not be wrong to say, that in Russia it has taken the strongest hold of the people. It is of course under the entire and absolute guidance of the Soviet State. There is no sex or age difference. Both boys and girls are grouped in different unions, according to their ages. The "Octobrist" groups include children of five to eight years of age. The "Pioneer" is a higher group, including youths aged eight to eighteen and the "Comsomols" represent adults from 18 to 25 years of age. The junior organisations which resemble our Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, comprising the children of peasants, industrial workmen, office workers, the

intelligentsia and the new *bourgeoisie* are taught and initiated, even at their tender ages in the principles of Marxism. The guide for the young "Pioneer" put in the hands of the new applicant tells him of the goal of life and the laws and customs he has to observe and follow for the achievement of a state of society, where exploitation shall cease and people can lead a full and varied life. This is the vow the member of the "Pioneer" takes:—

"I, a young Pioneer of the U. S. S. R. in the presence of my comrades, solemnly promise that (1) I shall stand steadfastly for the cause of the workmen class in its struggle for the liberation of the workmen and peasants of the whole world; (2) I shall honestly and constantly carry out the precepts of Lenin and the laws and customs of the Young Pioneers."

The five laws and five customs are as under:—

The Laws:—

1. The Pioneer is faithful to the cause of the workmen and to the precepts of Lenin.
2. The Pioneer is the younger brother and helper of the young Communist.
3. The Pioneer organises other children and joins with them in their life. The Pioneer is an example to all children.
4. The Pioneer is a comrade to other Pioneers and to the work-men and peasant children in the whole world.
5. The Pioneer strives for knowledge; knowledge and understanding are the great forces in the struggle for the cause of the workman.

The Customs:—

1. The Pioneer protects his own health and that of others. He is tolerant and cheerful. He rises early in the morning and does his sitting up exercise.
2. The Pioneer economises his own time and that of others. He does his task quickly and promptly.
3. The Pioneer is industrious and persevering, knows how to work collectively under all or any conditions and finds a way out in all circumstances.
4. The Pioneer is saving of the people's property, is careful with his books and clothes and the equipment of the workshop.
5. The Pioneer does not swear, smoke, or drink.

(Soviet Communism. A New Civilisation, page 403).

The members participate in all kinds of healthy games. They help in putting down drunken-ness. They swell processions, hold parades and render assistance at public meetings. They work while they study and they study while they sing and do all sorts of jobs not for private profit but for creation of a new life, a new civilisation.

Socialist Competition—Shock Brigades

The chief purpose of Soviet administration is to increase production, to its maximum limit, with a view to increase the standard of living of the workers and to create better and greater opportunities for cultural life. The evils of capitalism, John Stuart Mill is inclined to attribute, not to competition but to

the subjection of labour to capital and the much larger share of profit, which the employer of the means of production always extracts for himself. Socialist competition or emulation is the novel invention of Lenin. He saw that production, which is the chief objective of the state, could be considerably increased, if the worker's enthusiasm could be created and a spirit of healthy rivalry as of the play ground was instilled in him, even when he was at work. The factories were thus allowed to enter into a race for the superiority of management and production. Each shift of miners or each factory would send its challenge to the other shift or the other factory as to which could produce, in a given time, a larger volume, with less percentage of breakages, accidents and wastage. And when any side won, those of the members responsible for the result, were picked out for public honour and praise. They were awarded prizes, given certificates of merit and rewarded with better privileges of leave etc. These mostly formed the members of the Shock Brigades, who voluntarily undertook in their spare hours, to teach other workers, in the factory or the field, how to increase production, to ensure fulfilment of the general plan, in building up the socialist state. Such socialist competition is a great help in removing the inferiority complex. It spurs every one to do his best. It brings joy in work. It promotes solidarity. When a factory wins against another factory, it sends, its best men to the loser and the latter's defects and weaknesses are pointed out and removed.

It is thus, by a system of incisive emulation and socialist competition, that the unity of knowledge,

purpose, and accomplishment is sought and woven through out the various sections of the population."

In all activities of the factories, it is not only the manager, who represents the state that rules and guides its administration. The Trade Union plays a very important part and so does the Party. In fact, it is the triangle of the manager, the Trade Union representative and the Communist Party member, that guides the destinies of the factory administration.

"Stakhanovism"

That the state provides equal opportunities to all to rise to the highest position in life is seen from the system of "Stakhanovism", recently introduced. Stakhanov was a simple coal miner, entrusted with the charge of a shift at a coal-pit, in the Ukraine. He re-organised mining work in a manner, so as to produce the most encouraging results. This matter received the attention of the press, in the U. S. S. R. Stakhanov was only a miner but he was immediately promoted to a higher position than that of even a manager of a factory, inspite of protest from factory managers, that he was not an engineer or a technician he was allowed a salary higher than that given to such functionaries.

Stakhanov was authorised and given opportunity to introduce his system of organising the mines, at the various coal-fields, with a view to increase the output. It was thus by taking cognisance of the ability of every worker, to increase production, by every means and giving him, the greatest inducement to do

so, that the Soviet improved the methods of its plan for maximum production.

Dictatorship of the Proletariat

The Soviet rule is described as the dictatorship of the Proletariat. There are two ideas opposed to each other, coupled in the above expression. Dictatorship literally signifies the rule of one man. Proletariat means people. Is it then the rule of the people or of the people through the dictatorial powers of one single individual. When the writer of these pages visited the Russian pavilion in the International Exposition at Paris, in August 1937, the impression conveyed by a careful study of the exhibits did betray the fact, that the most powerful personality in the whole of the U. S. S. R. was Stalin with whose statues and photographs the pavilion was dominated, and the quotations from whose speeches formed an important part of the Exhibition. The general impression cannot but be that Stalin today is the Dictator of the land. Looking more deeply it is surprising, how a man who is not fraught with any great political power, under the constitution can dominate the country and enforce his iron rule? He is not the President of the Central Executive Committee of the all Union Congress, the highest post, recognised under the Soviet constitution. He is not even a common Commissar of any independent portfolio. His official designation is that of the Secretary of the Communist Party. This Party is the most influential limb in the body politic, without the slightest doubt. It forms the very fibre, root and marrow of the entire political machinery and existence of the U. S. S. R. It dominates every Soviet meeting. Its policy is never defied. Its word is law. Its action

is always upheld. But constitutionally the Communist Party has no place of importance. It is only a voluntary association. Stalin officially has not the powers of a dictator, such as Hitler or Mussolini. Even the President of the U. S. A. has more dictatorial powers than the greatest man in the U. S. S. R. under the Soviet constitution.

The question that arises is then whether Stalin's dictatorship is real or unreal. The U. S. S. R. is the only country in the world which has set the most astounding example of a perfect democracy, unheard of in the annals of the history of the world. Soviet Russia is a living proof today of the rule of the people, for the people, by the people. The multiplication into millions of election meetings, the interpolation of tiers upon tiers of councils,—these demonstrate, the democratic nature of the Constitution and the power of the people. Nowhere in the world have the people such opportunities of life as in Soviet Russia. Its citizens have the right to rise and to occupy the highest positions in the administration of the country. Education is free and compulsory for all. There is no sex disqualification. There is no oppression or suppression of the minority. There is no barrier between the intelligentsia and the masses. How could such a democratic rule be considered as dictatorship?

It is dictatorship in the respect, that Communism is a novel experiment, never tried before in the history of the world, on scientific lines,—barring the socialism that was practised in ancient India, when the country was divided into self sufficient villages, ruled by the *Patel* and the *Punchayet*, where the cultivator tilled


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the land, the village doctor, the priest, the barber, the carpenter, the wheelright, the potter and the smith did their work and all participated equally in the division of the produce of the land, society being so simple, then and the wants of the people so few. This experiment, unique in its nature, has many enemies both inside and outside and a strong arm is necessary to resist opposition especially in the commencement of its career, a strong and vigorous policy propounded by the Party has the universal approbation of the people. Stalin was never meant to be a dictator, but his various successes, especially in meeting the recalcitrance of the peasants in 1930-33 and the Five Year Plans raised him in the estimation of a people, not averse to hero-worship. Stalin is loved today by the mass, as they loved and admired Lenin, his predecessor and this love and adoration has given him that power which no statute book opens for him, but which he exercises, as his righteous reward for fighting and working for the cause of the proletariat, unflinchingly, devotedly and loyally, with a sacrificial ardour and flame.

When interviewed by Emil Ludwig—the famous author of "Napoleon Bonaparte" and other books, Stalin emphatically denied the allegation of individual rule. His reply was, "The decisions of single persons are always or are nearly always one-sided decisions. In every collegium, in every collective body, there are people whose opinions must be reckoned with. In our leading body, the Central Committee of our Party, which guides all our Soviet and Party organisations, there are about seventy members. Among those members of the Central Committee, there are to be found

the best of our industrial leaders, the best of our co-operative leaders, the best organisers of distribution, our best military men, our best propagandists and agitators, our best experts on Soviet farms, on collective farms, on individual peasant agriculture, our best experts on the nationalities inhabiting the Soviet Union, and on national policy. In this areopagus is concentrated the wisdom of the Party. Every one is able to contribute his experience. Were it otherwise, if decisions were taken by individuals we should have committed very serious mistakes in our work. But since every one is able to correct the errors of individual persons, and since we pay heed to such corrections we arrive at more or less correct decisions."

Lenin's conception of the essence of dictatorship can be gathered from the following passage from his writings:—

"The essence of dictatorship is to be found in the organisation and discipline of the workers' vanguard, as the only leader of the proletariat. The purpose of dictatorship is to establish socialism, to put an end to the division of society, into classes, to make all the members of the society, workers, to make the exploitation of one human being by another for ever impossible. This end can not be achieved at one stride. There will have to be a transitional period, a fairly long one, between Capitalism and Socialism. The reorganisation of production is a different matter. Time is requisite for the radical transportation of all departments of life. Furthermore, the power of custom is immense; people are habituated to a petty bourgeois economy, and will only be induced to change their

ways by a protracted and arduous struggle. That was why Marx, too, spoke of a transitional period between capitalism and socialism, a whole epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . . .

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a resolute persistent struggle, sanguinary and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, pedagogic and administrative, against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of the millions is a formidable force."

If Stalin is successfully boosted to-day, in the U. S. S. R. by the tacit understanding among the intellectual Junta, for the propagation of their cause, it is because of the fact that Stalin's disinterestedness and sacrifice for the well-being of the proletariat touches a responsive chord in their hearts. A single instance of his character would reveal the point.

It is said when Stalin was taking the salute of a batch of soldiers, one refused to "present arms." Stalin enquired of the man personally and he got the sullen reply to look at the state of the soldier's boots. They were torn and tattered, dirty and filthy, Stalin at once ordered that his own clean pair be given to him and he put on the soldier's torn pair, without the least hesitation or demur.

This deification of Stalin by the mass should have no place really speaking in Soviet Russia, the greatest Democracy of the world. But if the English people, who according to Pat Sloan (Soviet Democracy, page 208) have a reputation for being a cold blooded nation (rather a most level-headed nation) can give to their reigning King and Queen, a homage unrivalled by any

other nation of the world, (such is their loyalty and devotion to the Throne, no matter who occupies it), it should not be surprising if in young growing democracies, when the innate germs of hero-worship are still not inactive in the people, they should give vent to their pent up feelings and deify their heroes.

The following dialogue, mentioned in Sloan's "Soviet Democracy" (pages 239/240) is of interest:—

"You say that in order to build our Socialist society we sacrificed personal liberty and suffered privation," said Stalin to the American correspondent, Roy Howard. "But we did not build this society in order to restrict personal liberty, but in order that the human individual may feel really free. We built it for the sake of real personal liberty, liberty without quotation marks. It is difficult for me to imagine what "personal liberty" is enjoyed by an unemployed person who goes about hungry and can not find employment. Real liberty can exist only where exploitation has been abolished, where there is no oppression of some by others, where there is no unemployment and poverty, where a man is not haunted by the fear of being tomorrow deprived of work, of home, and of bread. Only in such a society is real and not paper, personal and every other liberty possible."

Pat Sloan continues, "Such a liberty as described here by Stalin has had to be fought for, won and has to be defended. But the defence of liberty is the suppression of its enemies (take for example the trials of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek and Sokolnikof which took place in Moscow and of which the Capitalist press of Great Britain made capital by imputing motives of

dissatisfaction of the people with the dictatorial regime of Stalin). "The defence of Democracy therefore, necessitates discipline over its opponents. Democracy for the people means discipline among the people and dictatorship over the enemies of the people.

Maxwell on Civil Liberty in Soviet Russia

The following comments made by Bertram W. Maxwell in his book "The Soviet State" (pages 213|15) are significant and while giving a graphic picture of the whole situation serve as a guide to our understanding:—

"In attempting to describe the concepts of civil liberty under the Soviets, one is confronted with difficulties and paradoxes. The temptation to compare the state of affairs in Russia with that in Western Europe, especially conditions as they exist in the Anglo-American world, drives one nigh to despair. It is only when one constantly keeps in mind the historic background of Russia, and the conditions, under which the Russian people have lived for centuries that one can understand the philosophy of the Bolshevik State. There never was any liberty in Russia; the people from the very beginning of their political existence were ruled by some autocracy or other; the great movements, such as the religious revolts in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth centuries, and the political revolutions in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries which rocked the foundations of the Western world, never penetrated Russia. Sporadic attempts by small idealistic groups were crushed ruthlessly with much blood and cruelty. Thus the traditional

conceptions of liberty, such as are an integral part of the West, were known to only a few in Russia, and those were far removed from the masses socially and economically. The revolutionary movement of the Nineteenth and the first decade of the Twentieth Century was confined to a narrow intellectual group who, after great sacrifices, succeeded in persuading a minority of the skilled workmen in the larger centres of the Empire to join. Since the majority of the population consisted of nearly 85 per cent of peasants, illiterate and superstitious, engaged in a terrific struggle to keep body and soul together, there can be no question of mass movements for liberties as are known to Western Europe. To be sure there were peasant uprisings in Russia, but the desire of the peasant was for more land and had the autocracy possessed a minimum of social intelligence and granted the peasants some concessions in this connection, it is doubtful if the present Government would be entrenched in the Kremlin. Even if the autocracy had wanted to use reason, it would have been stopped by the granite wall of a powerful, corrupt and selfish landowning aristocracy, who had not progressed very far from the days when the majority of the peasants were serfs. To be sure the granting of the Duma and later the constitution of 1905, was a degree of political concession, but any one even slightly acquainted with Russian conditions knows that the autocracy soon repented of its concession and the October Manifesto was annulled. At the opening of the World War, Russia was an autocracy. The tragic interlude between March and October 1917 was an attempt to graft Western European institutions into the gnarled stump

of the Russian body politic and the result was a dismal failure.

The Bolsheviks, notwithstanding their high sounding rhetoric are realists and coming to power with full knowledge of Russian history and conditions, proceeded to establish a state, which distasteful as it is to the Western mind, fits the majority of the Russians. Only in the rigid absolutism now called "The Rule of the Proletariat" could Russia with its cultural backwardsness progress. But the Bolsheviks do not intend to create a particular ruling class but to abolish all classes and create a classless State of proletarians, as is shown from the following quotation from Lenin's State and Revolution:—

"The dictatorship of the proletariat—that is the organisation of the advanced guard of the oppressed as a ruling class for the purpose of crusing the oppressors, can not produce merely an expansion of democracy. Together with an immense expanse of democracy—for the first time becoming democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the rich—the dictatorship of the proletariat will produce a series of restrictions on liberty in the case of the oppressors, exploiters and capitalists. We must crush them in order to free humanity from wage slavery; their resistance must be broken by force. It is clear that where there is suppression there must also be violence, and there can not be liberty or democracy .... Only in Communist society when the resistance of the capitalists has finally been broken, when the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no longer any classes, only then does the state dis-

appear and can one speak of freedom. Only then will be possible, and will be realised, a really full democracy, a democracy without any exception. And only then will Democracy itself begin to wither away by virtue of the simple fact that freed from Capitalist slavery . . . . . the people will gradually become accustomed to the observance of the elementary rules of social life, known for centuries, repeated for thousands of years in all sermons. They will become accustomed to their observance without force, without constraint, without subjection, without the special apparatus of compulsion which is called the State."

CHAPTER VI

THE RIGA "CORRESPONDENTS" ETC.

FROM time to time there have been innumerable books and reports issued on the condition of the people and the state of affairs in the U. S. S. R. since the revolution in 1917. The worst critics have been those interested in Capitalism, and as such their criticism can have little value. The Capitalist Press ever since the introduction of revolutionary methods in to the U. S. S. R. has been alert in watching and vigilant in detecting flaws and giving expression to pictures of exaggeration of the reign of terror and intimidation in Soviet Russia.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his book "Soviet Russia" written in 1928, relates how most of the most mischievous news pertaining to Russia was promulgated by the so called Riga correspondents of British and other newspapers. On how those Riga correspondents were 'made,' he quotes a writer, in the New York *Nation*. "The first time I served as a Riga correspondent was in London. An editor made a correspondent of me by giving me an editorial leader, clipped from one of the morning papers. He instructed me to recast a part of it in the form of a despatch and date it from Riga. The editorial was one reviewing in some detail the pernicious activities of the Third International. I must have re-written it rather well for later I was entrusted with other tasks of the same delicate nature. I became the paper's regular correspondent—"From our own correspondent," as they like to say in Fleet Street. A year later I was in Paris and

attached to a newspaper there. And in Paris I found myself again a Riga correspondent. The work was two-fold now. There were French journals and English journals to re-write. All of them, including the one in London which formerly employed me, seemed to boast Riga correspondents. In all their despatches, there were revelations,—Bolshevist atrocities, dissatisfaction of the people with the government. As in London, this material was turned over to me; and out of the mass another composite Riga correspondent was born.

Whenever I think of Riga now I do not visualise a city, but a newspaper office, old desk, paste-pots shears, typewriters, waste papers. Riga is a newspaper office city. It may have a geographic location. For all I know, it may be populated with individuals absorbed in their own affairs; eating well, dreaming of owning automobiles. You can not prove it to me. Once, in a moment of inexcusable curiosity I went to the trouble of hunting up Riga in the Encyclopaedia Britannica. That fount of current information describes it as a thriving port on the Baltic Sea, from which agricultural products, chiefly oats, are exported to England. Obviously, it was an old edition of the Encyclopaedia. By this time the rumours far outnumber the oats.

If cities ever receive decorations for signal service, the Western world should confer prime honours upon Riga. By its mere existence as a four letter word for a despatch date line, it has served as a barrier against the plots of the Soviets, thus keeping sacred and inviolate the idealism of Western Europe. Riga defends the world against the insidious propa-

ganda of the Soviets. Red lines break against its intrepid front."

Andrew Smith on Soviet Russia

The most bitter indictment of Russia comes from the pen of Andrew Smith supposed to be a prominent American Communist member, who left U. S. A. in 1932, with the intention to make his permanent home in the "promised land," but who returned disillusioned, very shortly. In the words of his publisher, "He found a Russia imprisoned in a vast bureaucracy, with a propaganda smothering truth, with oppression in the name of freedom, with every cause for which he struggled all his life, perverted into its opposite." The ghastly picture which the author unfolds in the pages of his book "I was a Soviet Worker" deserves our attention for the reason, that he says he was a Communist himself, before he started for settlement in the U. S. S. R. and was not guided by any Capitalist prejudice. The question then arises, is this indictment correct?

It has to be noted that he went to Russia at the time, when that country was passing through the travail of a famine brought on by the folly of the peasants, themselves, who refused to comply with the state orders, to cultivate land, with a view to sharing produce with the State, who supplied them with tractors, seeds and implements. Not enough of land was ploughed and what was ploughed and sown was not properly harvested. What was harvested was secreted by them for their own consumption and the net result was a state of complete anarchy,—the State opposed to the peasantry, the town robbed of its food

supply, the shortage of food, fodder and cattle, (a great number of cattle was voluntarily killed by the peasants in their mad and infuriated fury against the State), reigning every where. It was a most critical stage of the Russian Revolution. What the author therefore speaks of, in view of the special circumstances existing at that time, does not justify his attack. Women compelled to sell their bodies to supplement their meagre wages during the day, children dirty, under-nourished and ill-clad, romping in the streets, uncared for and untended, men gnashing their teeth in sheer despair to turn out the necessary quota of work assigned to them, as planned; all eager and anxious outwardly to please the tyrannous oligarchy, but inwardly dissatisfied and furious at the revolution —such is the picture which the author lays bare—a picture much exaggerated in its luridness, as can be evidenced by the statement of other authors, especially Sidney and Beatrice Webb, whose book "Soviet Communism—A New Civilisation" deals with the subject, in the minutest details and whose findings are based on facts studied on the spot, sifted scientifically. We shall make an examination of the results of the Soviet rule, by comparing statistics of the progress made in various departments of human life.

CHAPTER VII

RESULT OF SOVIET RULE

AT the approach of the Russian pavillion in the International Exposition in Paris, 1937, there was a huge board, displaying the following passage from one of Stalin's speeches.

"During this brief period Russia has rapidly transformed itself. It no longer has a mediaeval aspect. From a rural land, it has become an industrial country. It has become a country of great collective mechanised agriculture. From a country ignorant, illiterate and uncultured it has become or rather is becoming a literate and cultured country, covered over with a great number of primary, secondary and superior educational institutions, where instruction is given in Russian and other languages." The above sums up the situation in Soviet Russia today.

It would be better to discuss the results of the Soviet Rule, on the plan of Maurice Hindus, who divided Russian life into the following sections:—

(1) Consumption or the standard of living in terms of material satisfaction.

(2) Construction or the process of developing industries.

(3) Culture or education, hygiene, refinement of manners and civilised diversions.

(4) Psychology or the reconstruction of human personality.

The U. S. S. R. has a special department of statistics. This is necessary for a country that has to

subsist by a method of planned economy. The greatest care is bestowed by Soviet Russia on the collection of all the necessary data, on which the success of its plan depends.

1. Standard of Living

The first plan covered a period of five years, 1928-32. Maurice Hindus summing up the results of the first plan, is inclined to think, that from the point of view of the standard of living, there was a definite fall. Sidney and Beatrice Webb neither agree nor disagree with this conclusion. But they offer their comments. In view of the many difficulties and obstacles and much greater pressure that was necessary on Soviet finances, chiefly for defence purpose, the first Five Year Plan, was one of self-denial. If the standard of life was not higher than before, the reasons of state requiring her to arm against the contemplated aggression of Japan, which was feared at that time, they say, should be taken into consideration. The recalcitrance of the "Kulak" in not submitting to the State plan of collective farming is another great important factor which hindered production, on the scale contemplated and which created that shortage of food supplies, that we have already referred to in previous pages. Considerable loss was the out-come of the labour of the State in liquidating the kulak," the small farmer, who like the Indian *bania*, lived on the exploited labour of the peasant, whom he enslaved. The punishment meted out to the "Kulak" was the harshest and this was deemed imperative, if Marx-Leninism was to triumph. It was on account of these adverse factors

that there was a set-back in the first period of planning.

The second plan reveals a different tale. By 1934-35 a complete peaceful order of things had been evolved and today it is calculated that there is abundance of food and other articles. There are greater numbers of Government Stores where bread is distributed free and there are far more shops and kitchens attached to factories and collective and state farms, where food of excellent quality is sold at very cheap rates. The bazar is maintained in each city where peasants and workers in *artels*, can sell their commodities, at prices in competition with one another. No attempt can be made in forcing the prices up, on account of Government Stores, which sell at uniform prices. Let us take only two useful household commodities, to identify the rise in the standard of living.

In 1913, the number of boots manufactured in Russia was 17 million pairs. In 1931, Russia manufactured 76·8 million pairs. In 1913, Russia manufactured 94,000 tons of soap. In 1931, her manufacture of this commodity increased to 1,89,000 tons. Mr. M. R. Masani writes in his book "Soviet Side-lights" that one most important change, he noticed on his second visit to Russia in 1936 (his first one was made in 1927) was the absence of smells and uncleanliness.

After giving figures of consumption of soap and boots, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, "We could quote similar statistics, which could only make the reader dizzy, with regard to article after article, of which it can be shown, that year by year, a much larger quan-

tity per head of population is actually being distributed to the inhabitants, without in any way lessening the apparent scarcity. One can not fail to recognise **that in 1935, there is vastly greater plenty, in the cities and in the villages, than has been at any previous time in Russian history.** The shops and stores are now abundantly supplied, ration cards have been one after another abolished, and the total retail sales are going up by leaps and bounds."

Housing

There was a time when nine-tenths of the Russian population of 170 millions were content to live in one room tenements. Today there is a feverish rush in building more houses, for the accommodation of all the factory workers in the various important towns and cities and there is a clamour and an ever widening desire for two to three rooms per family.

Unemployment Abolished

The most important result of Soviet rule is that it has abolished unemployment—the prevailing evil of the capitalist countries of the world. By promulgating the idea that no man can eat, unless he works, the Soviet plan makes room for every man and woman to be employed either in the factory, the co-operative stores or the collective farm. The women enjoy the same right to work as men, both in the fields and in the factories. In fact, in some respects, they are better protected than men and enjoy better privileges and rights regarding grant of leave for sickness. Training every man and finding him suitable employment is Soviet Russia's greatest achievement and its justification for existence. It has proved what

can be effected by a planned economy, in banishing scarcity and poverty, raising man's standard of living, and finding employment for all, according to their capacities. It is an achievement of no mean order.

It is true that the Soviet worker today is still not so well-fed, well-clothed and well-housed as the best of his compatriots in Great Britain and America, the two most wealthy and prosperous countries of the world, but it is undoubtedly true also, that the Soviet Union is experiencing a prosperity never known before, in its history. The Soviet worker is much better off than he was in the days of the Czar and there are prospects of greater material improvement.

2. Construction or the Process of Developing Industries

Let us now take stock of the industrial growth of the U. S. S. R. during the short spell of twenty years of its regime.

Lenin with the insight of a prophet perceived that to emanicipate the U.S.S.R. from the tangle of a foreign yoke and to save it from sliding into Capitalist clutches, it was necessary to make it self-sufficient in every respect. Russia was mostly an agricultural country without any big industries. To convert the vast areas of agricultural lands tilled by the hand plough into mechanised collective farms, was the obvious policy to pursue. Mechanisation of agriculture became the main plank in the Soviet platform of rule. Unfortunately the mass was steeped in ignorance and was deficient in any great skill of workmaship. The difficulty of evolving an industrial class, out of a mass

with an "unprecedented low level of industrial aptitude" —a mass that was addicted and habituated to unpunctuality, irregularity, dirt and squalor, disease, drunkenness and disability, was enormous. To train that mass, first in the schools and colleges and technical institutions, as is generally done in every capitalist country, should have been the obvious course. But the factor of time and money weighed heavily. If before starting industries, only industrial schools were started, to give the necessary training, it would have meant wasting precious time so Soviet Russia hit upon the plan of initiating huge enterprises, with the aid of foreign engineers and by employing unskilled home labour. In this respect, Stalin's speech which is a remarkable one may be quoted:—

"We are faced with the dilemma: either by teaching people in technical schools to post-pone for ten years the production and mass exploitation of machines, while technically literate cadres would be trained in schools; or to proceed immediately with the creation of machines and to develop their mass exploitation in the national economy, so as to teach people technique; and prepare cadres in the very process of production and exploitation of machines. We chose the second course. We openly and deliberately agreed to the inevitable costs and extra expenditure involved, in the shortage of technically prepared people capable of handling machines. True, no small number of machines was smashed during this time, but to make up for this, we have gained what is most precious, time, and we have created what is most valuable in economy—cadres. In three to four years we created cadres of technically literate people, both in the field

of production of various machines, (tractors, automobiles, tanks, air planes, and so on) and in the field of mass exploitation. What was accomplished in Europe in the course of decades, we succeeded in accomplishing, roughly and in the main, in the course of three to four years. The costs and extra expenses, the breakages of machines and other losses, have been much more than compensated .... Man must be grown as carefully and attentively as a gardener grows a favourite fruit tree. To educate, to help to grow, to offer a prospect, to promote in time, to transfer in time to another position if the man does not manage his work, without waiting for him to fail completely; carefully to grow and train people; correctly to distribute and organise them in production; or organise wages so that they would strengthen the decisive links of production and prompt people on to higher skill,—this is what we need in order to create a large army of industrial—technical cadres."

What amount of wastage was experienced in the commencement of the enterprise of running big industries is witnessed from the following two examples cited by Sidney and Beatrice Webb. On 1st May, 1932 these authors were invited to the opening ceremony of the big Works at Gorki, for the manufacture of motor cars and motor lorries. The buildings were built on the design of Ford's Works at Detroit and filled—with expensive machinery. The very day that it was opened the conveyor refused to work. The bed on which it was laid sagged on account of a faulty foundation. The conveyor was supposed to assemble the parts and drop one vehicle at the interval of every five or ten minutes. The chaos and disorder created

could be more imagined than described. The huge failure on the opening day gave an opportunity to the Capitalist press to make a hue and cry and it hailed the news with delight. The *Times* reported that the works would never be restarted and that a million dollars had been sunk in vain. But the Russians were not to be beaten. The faults were repaired and the machinery was once more put into working order. We are told that by 1934 85,000 motor cars and motor lorries had been manufactured and delivered.

There is the same story of failure repeated at Stalingrad, where the Russians started a factory for the manufacture of tractors. It was opened in 1930 but hardly had the opening ceremony been performed than the machinery stuck. It was feared that the work would be abandoned for it took them more than a year to find out the faults and repair them. The factory works in full swing and we are told the conveyor drops 144 efficient tractors every twentyfour hours—an achievement of no mean order.

The two greatest engineering achievements of Soviet Russia are the construction of the Volga Moscow Canal—the second largest canal in the world and the Metro—the Moscow underground railway. The canal cost 1400 million roubles. Its length is 127 kilometres i. e. a little more than 78 miles and it is 5·5metres i. e. about 18 feet deep. It has capacity of 136 million cubic metres. The Suez Canal is 164 kilometres long and has a capacity of 75 million cubic metres. The Panama Canal which is the largest in the world, is 81 kilometres long and has a capacity of 160 million metres. The Moscow Canal joins Moscow,

with the Baltic Sea in the North and the Black Sea in the South. It is navigated by big ships and is an important means of communication.

The Metro was planned in 1932 and it took about two and half years to be completed. It cost the Soviet Government 70 million roubles, not counting the free work that was contributed by innumerable *komsomols*, in their spare hours, each one taking a pride in his contribution. Mr. Masani gives the following description which is interesting:—

"This underground railway extending 1119 kilometres is the pride of the people of Moscow. Not only does the speed of the work compare favourably with similar efforts in the European countries but the result is magnificent. While the Paris Metro is miserably dingy and depressing, while the London Tube is quick and clean but monotonous, the Moscow Sub-way is a world of brightness and joy. The stations underground are built of marble. They are brightly lit and scrupously clean.

It gives the lie to the usual tripe about Socialism producing a dead level of monotony and uniformity. "Socialism means barracks" rants the anti-socialist. Is it only an accident then, that while every underground station in London is exactly like every other, every station in Moscow is built in a style all its own. Groups of architects were set to work on each station completely independently of the others, in socialistic competition.' The result is a marvel in variety. Straight lines at one stop, beautiful curves at the next greet the eyes of the traveller, as one station succeeds another. No longer is marble the monopoly of the

plutocrat. Every Moscow worker may now live a while in a marble place. And it is his. As like as not, he took a hand in its making." (Soviet Side-Lights pages 17 and 18).

At the moment of writing these pages, there is news from Tiflis, the capital seat of South Russia, that a giant power station, of 90,000 killowatts capacity is being built at the height of about 5000 feet on the river Khram, about seventy five miles away from Tiflis. There can be no mistaking that the scientifically minded Russians are forging ahead in industrial pursuits as quickly, as they were lethargic before the revolution.

Some Statistical Figures

The following figures taken from the exhibits at the Russian Pavilion, in the Paris International Exposition, held in 1937 are of interest. That the revolution was complete, is evidenced from the figures of the re-division of land. In 1917, 215 million hectares of land were possessed by the peasants and 155 million hectars were in the possession of landlords, capitalists, the Church and the Treasury. In 1936, all the land was transferred to the peasantry, under state control and direction, not even an acre remaining in the hands of the capitalist or the church. The system of mechanised agriculture being rigorously followed, there was a considerable increase in agricultural products. In 1913, it amounted to 10 milliard roubles. In 1937, it increased to 77 milliard roubles. In 1913, there was not a single tractor on Russian soil. By 1936, there were in use 3,16,000 tractors in Kolkho Zieus fields over and above 85,000 tractors employed by the

Sovkhoz. Tinning of fish in Cazarist Russia was unknown. In the First Plan, 1928-32, 251 million roubles were budgeted for this purpose and spent. In the Second Plan, 1933-37, 5263 million roubles were sanctioned. In 1932, the production and distribution of meat was 3,75,000 tons. In 1936, it was 7,74,000 tons. In 1932, the total quantity of sausages consumed was 593 thousand tons. In 1936, it was 2446 thousand tons. The production of tinned fruit had increased considerably also. In 1913, the quantity was 80 million bottles. In 1936, it increased to 1247 million bottles. In 1917, there were no mills for the manufacture of agricultural implements. In 1936, there were 289 such mills working.

The expansion of industry is reflected in the figures of revenue. In 1913, the national revenue was 21 milliard roubles. In 1936, it was 86 milliard roubles. The salaries paid in 1928 amounted to 8 milliard roubles. In 1936, 71 milliard roubles were paid by way of salaries. In 1928, the number of the unemployed in Russia was one million and five hundred thousand. By 1931 unemployment was nil and the arrangements are so progressive, that there is no possibility of any unemployment in the future. There being no unemployment, no unemployment dole as is in vogue in the Capitalist countries, is paid. Besides canalisation of which we have written in earlier pages about 20,860 klm. of railway lines were laid during the period, to correspond with the increase in the volume of traffic. In this connection what Sidney and Beatrice Webb write in their book "Soviet Russia (page 650) is of special interest. "The railways, vastly increased in length between 1913 and 1935, are in this decade,

the only ones in the world, to show year by year, increased passenger and goods traffic habitually exceeding the transporting capacity." The continual annual increase in the production and distribution of electrical current, for supply to the factories, cities and even distant villages which are also lighted by electricity, is a notable performance—is it not an undeniable indication of the rising tide of prosperity?

Sidney and Beatrice Webb referring to this aspect of material progress write (see page 651) "There seems no doubt that the material progress of the U. S. S. R. from the exceptionally low level to which it had been reduced in 1921 has not only been enormous but has even been proportionately greater than that of any other country." The opinion expressed by Dr. Borris Brutzkus, a prominent Russian critic of Soviet Communism, on the industrial advancement of the U. S. S. R. after the operation of the Five Year Plan, quoted by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, is of significance. "The superficial successes achieved in the construction of the heavy industry are remarkable. The basic supply of energy to the economic system was expanded by the construction of a series of power stations. New coal fields were developed outside the Donets Basin. In particular the enormous coal field of Kuznetz (Western Siberia); deposits of coal in the Urals, of brown coal near Moscow, and of peat were exploited. This made it possible to decentralise industry without at least proportionately, increasing the dependence of industries on coal supplies from the Donets Basin. The iron industry showed a notable expansion; here most emphasis was laid upon the development on a great scale, of the Magnitogorsk-

Kuznetz expansion. According to the Five Year Plan the capacity of the blast furnaces in operation was to increase from 20,000 cubic metres to 36,800 cubic metres or 84 per cent; and the area covered by the Martin furnaces from 4630 square metres to 6421 square metres or 39 per cent. The engineering industry was developed on an exceptionally imposing scale; there hardly remain machines so complex that they can not be built in Russia. After U. S. A. Russia has the greatest tractor industry in the world, whereas before the Five Year Plan the Russian production of tractors was quite insignificant. A great chemical industry was hardly existent before the war. According to the calculations of Professor Prokopovich, the value of the original capital of Russian industry amounted to 3700 million roubles; thus capital increased by 120 per cent. Inspite of all the reservations which have to be made in connection with such computations, these figures do give an idea of the magnitude of the capital investments into industry." (Soviet Communism—A New Civilisation, pages 651/652.)

3. Education and Cultural Advancement

"No one is so savage that he can not become civilised, if he lend a patient ear to culture," said Horace.

One of the first duties that the Revolution Committee undertook to do, when it got the reins of power in its hands was to issue decrees propounding its policy and plan for educating the masses. If any thing justifies Soviet Communism, undoubtedly it is the thoroughness and efficiency with which Soviet Russia has planned and carried out its vast educational

schemes for the training of all its people, especially its backward races, who to-day have their own schools and colleges and polytechnical institutions and impart education through the medium of their own vernaculars. Russian undoubtedly is the first language of the land but in the primary and secondary schools, vernaculars are allowed to take precedence, for the facility of the young pupils. In the higher department of education Russian is the chief language used as the medium of instruction throughout the U.S.S.R. In some cases the vernacular language is the vehicle of communication throughout the local educational system. This is the case in the Ukraine, White Russia, Georgia and Armenia.

What are the chief characteristics of Russian education? What strikes us foremost is the universality of its system. The State's chief obligation is to train and educate every boy and girl, without distinction. They are in schools from the age of eight to seventeen. Prior to schooling, for two to three years the children are trained in the kindergartens. The object of education is to give training for life. Learning by doing is the motto,—not pedantic philosophy nor ascetic mysticism, but a training for a full and varied life. Stalin said "Man must be grown, as carefully and attentively as a favourite fruit tree" and this principle is rigidly endorsed in the educational policy of the State. It is doubtful if in any country of the world, the care and attention which Soviet Russia pays to the education of its people are equalled.

What are results of the educational policy of the Soviet State? When Lenin came to power and the

Bolshevik rule started, 70 or 80 per cent of the people were illiterate. In 1914, the number of students, studying in the schools was seven millions. In 1929, this number increased to eleven millions. And after 1931, when education was made compulsory by law, it further increased to nineteen millions. Certain remote parts of Asiatic Russia are still devoid of facilities for education, but on the whole, what Russia has been able to achieve in this direction, should be an eye-opener and the best answer to the destructive criticism of the capitalist. The total number of students in all grades, including those studying in the kindergartens and the colleges for higher and special training is estimated to be 33 millions i. e. one out of every five citizens in the U. S. S. R. is under instruction. Is there any capitalist country which can show such a record of achievement? Nearly ninety per cent of the people between the ages of eight and fifty, are literate in the U. S. S. R.

Education upto the age of seventeen is compulsory for all, but the free education of the students does not end there. Those who are fitted for higher studies are given the opportunity of prosecuting their studies, at the State's expense, in the various colleges and technical institutions, according to their capacity and liking.

The immediate result of the Soviet educational policy was not quite encouraging. On account of paucity of funds and want of experience and the difficulties the State had to face after the revolution, in meeting opposition from every quarter, (besides the great famine of 1921 which reduced the country to the level of starvation) the hope of Lenin to carry the torch

of learning to every homestead was not fulfilled. It is said that in the commencement of Soviet rule, the conditions became even worse than those prevailing in the time of the Czar. Inefficiency and confusion in all educational affairs were a common feature. A foreign visitor compared the state oi affairs then reigning as a "Happy Bedlam." How things eventually were improved and a higher standard of efficiency was reached are matters of History.

The underlying idea of the Soviet policy to give the best training to its citizens is, that if they are better equipped, they can give better service to the State. The State gives opportunities to the workers, at every stage and step for their cultural improvement. Their artistic and literary tastes are developed and encouraged. The aesthetic value is never lost sight of. The school children are especially reared up in the atmosphere of art and beauty. "The unique thing here" said Mr. Brailsford, on his visit to Russia in 1920 and indeed in all Russian schools was the prominence given to aesthetic culture. "Every school has its literary, musical and dramatic circles." Many a girl or boy who join the school amateur theatricals, later on become professionals.

In the capitalist countries of the world, culture is considered the right and privilege of the few. The masses have hardly any access to the goddess of learning. They do not share the company of the learned and the cultured, who assume superior and arrogant manners. In Great Britain this distinction is observed more. Eton and Harrow are the centres and preserves of the aristocracy of the land. In Soviet Russia such

a distinction is poison. There are no separate schools for separate classes. Stalin's children learn side by side with the children of common workmen.

The Amenities. Rest and Culture Parks

In Soviet Russia, there are more Rest and Culture Parks, more Libraries and Reading Rooms, more Clubs and more Newspapers, more Books and more Journals, more Music Saloons, Theatres, Cinemas, Radios, Operas, more Debating Societies and Lecture Halls, than even in Great Britain or America, the wealthiest and the most prosperous countries of the world.

In the Rest and Culture Parks of Soviet Russia, there are corners reserved for children, who come on picnics and holiday making. These parks are the favourite resort of all classes of people. They are so beautiful, that one recalls the exclamation of H. G. Wells, that if he had the choice, he would like to be re-born in a Russian Rest and Culture Park. Communal singing, dancing, lectures and radio music are the daily items on the programme. There were no such parks in Czarist times. Today, there are 263 Parks situated in all the important towns.

Literary Publications

The literary output of the U. S. S. R. is phenomenal. It is a feather in the cap of the Soviet administration. The Bolsheviks believe in the efficacy of propaganda and the innumerable government publishing houses continuously pour out, not only in Russian but in other languages a plethora of books and journals and reports for greedy consumption by the people. Love of reading is inculcated in

the mass by a systematic training. It is said so great is the demand for books, that practically every edition of a book gets quickly sold, after its publication. In addition to Government records and reports, it is said in the year 1932, there were 55,000 books (separate titles) published—about five hundred million copies. This makes a phenomenal record, as the Soviet publications in that year exceeded the total publication of the rest of the world.

Libraries and Lecture Halls

In 1914, the number of libraries in Russia was 12,600. In 1936, this number increased to 55,355. In the Czarist time, there were no public lecture halls. In 1936, there were as many as 27,000 lecture halls open to the public. Works of Tolstoy find great favour with the people and among the foreign classical writers the most popular are Shakespeare, Byron, Standalt, Balzac, Heine, Goethe. With a view to encourage the taste for reading, books are sold at cheap prices. Authors who produce good literature have an honoured place in Soviet Russia. In promulgating culture, its "use" value is chiefly stressed. Singing, dancing, painting, drawing, drama, music, have a "use" value and they play a conspicuous part in the training of every man, woman and child.

Byron's Popularity

Lord Byron is a popular literary God of the Russians. Recently, the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of this great "rebel poet" of England was celebrated by the Soviet Union with great eclat and enthusiasm. Not only lectures and readings were held in Leningrad and other important cities but the

message of Byron was taken to every remote town and hamlet and his poems sung at every hearth and in every home. Why is it that Byron appeals to the Russians? His very rebelliousness, his passionate love of freedom, liberty and justice, the maiden speech he made in the House of Lords in defence of the weavers of Nottingham and the laying down of his young and precious life in defence of Greece in its struggle for independence from Turkey—these are the high spots in Byron's life and career, which appeal to the human mind and it is no wonder if Russia honours England's poet.

It is said in the last two decades, 3,00,000 copies of Byron's "Works" have been published and distributed in the Soviet Union. Before the revolution hardly 3000 copies were extant in the whole of Russia.

Peasants' Homes

Crichton gives a pleasant account of what is known in Russia, as a peasant's home. He visited one situated on the outskirts of Moscow. It is said there are more than 1500 such homes in the U. S. S. R. Each one is a sort of a club for the peasants who come to town on business or holiday. The charges vary according to the status of the farmer. A member of a collective farm pays about fifty kopeks, for sleeping at night and thirty-five kopeks for each meal, during the day *Kulaks* are not allowed in these homes. If a peasant has no money, he is given shelter without any charge.

Each home is well equipped with a reading room and library, a lecture hall, a demonstration room and a museum. A fine collection of the latest scientific

implements and agricultural tools is kept in each home for demonstration purposes. Lectures are daily held for training the farmers. There are interesting models, charts and illustrations, showing the working of the different kinds of collective and state farms.

The peasant has the privilege to stay in the home, so long as he likes. He gets free legal advice, free medical treatment and free training in the methods of scientific agriculture.

Newspapers

The first newspaper in Russia was founded in 1703 by Peter the Great, under the title of "News of the Military and other matters worthy of note." He was one of the first Russian journalists. He used to select passages of note from Dutch newspapers and translate them for his journal. He often read the proofs.

The newspaper reading public today in the U. S. S. R. is the largest in the world. The object of the Soviet State is not only to make every citizen "alphabetically literate," but "politically literate" also and newspapers are held as most potent instruments in the dissemination of political education. There are ten thousand different journals issued in the U. S. S. R. written in Russian and 88 other languages. They comprise dailies, weeklies and monthly and quarterly journals. Their circulation is said to be 32 million copies a day as compared with 39 millions in the United States of America. The constant theme is the improvement in the methods of production. No court affairs, no divorce cases, no advertisements of buying and selling, no love stories, no scandals disfigure the pages of

Russian journals. The newspaper is the venue for ventilating the workers' grievances, for exposing the mistakes and blunders of the officials, engaged in factory or collective farm, for discussion of policy, for the general improvement of the State resources and dissemination of general culture among the people.

Every factory has its wall newspapper. The defects of management and the workers' grievances are reflected in these wall newspapers.

Theatres and Cinemas

Employment of leisure with a view to increase the physical and mental efficiency of the workers plays no less an important part, in the Soviet policy and programme. In 1914, the number of theatres and cinemas in Russia were 200 and 1200 respectively. In 1936, there were 768 theatres and 28,600 cinemas. It is very significant to note, that the theatre, the cinema, the ballet, the opera, fall within the sphere of Commissar of Education. The Soviet Government recognises their educative value in influencing the people's character and their mode of thinking. Every village, every state factory, every farm, has its own theatre and cinema. It must be pointed out that children's theatres and cinemas are quite distinct and those under 16 year of age are not admitted to the ordinary theatres.

Physical Culture and Sports

The maintenance of physical health constitutes a part of civic duty and the Commissar of Education is entrusted with the work of organising drill exercises in every school and college and the cultivation of games and sports in every walk of life. At the entrance of a sport stadium, the common sight that

meets the eye is the board with the motto "Be ready for Labour and Defence." The love for out-door games is considerably encouraged.

The authors of "Red Medicine" state that in Moscow alone, there are 100 sports grounds. The Dynamo Sports Club Stadium has a sitting accommodation for 50,000 and standing room for 25,000 more. All those who take part in sports are first medically examined. Those who are successful in various competitions are awarded distinction badges.

Club Life

Another characteristic of Soviet Russia is the Club life that it inculcates. Every factory, collective farm, railway organisation has its own club. There is very little of home or family attachment in Russian life. Whether this is good or otherwise is a debatable point. The private homes are places where people retire for the night's rest and sleep. The club house is a glorified Young Men's or Women's Christian Association. We can as well call it Y. W. C. A. or Y. M. C. A. interpreting "C" for "Comrade" instead of "Christian." The club is the centre for communistic training, rest, recreation and culture. It was Lenin's teaching that the "Trade Unions" should function as schools of communism and most of the clubs in the U. S. S. R. are run by the Trade Unions. In 1914 there were 200 clubs in Russia. There are to-day 50,000 clubs,—which shows the extraordinary revolutionary change in the mode of living of the people.

Child Welfare

Protection of women and child welfare form the principal items of interest in Bolshevik rule. Setting

free the mother from the burden of constant care of her children, with a view that she may devote greater time to nation building activities, is to speak in the words of Lenin, "the germ cell of the Communistic Society." There are 33 child welfare societies in Moscow alone. At each of these societies about 7000 children a year are taken care of. The function of the health visitors is to visit the homes of the children and it is said about 40,000 such home visits are paid annually by the visitors. The creches that are established both in the rural and urban areas take up children from the age of two months. They are kept upto the age of three years, some times upto five years. In 1914, the number of creches, in the whole of Russia was fourteen. Today there are 2000 creches. It is a debatable point whether this transference of parental duty to the State is conducive to the growth of family life and personal responsibility. The State being concerned with production, each worker is expected to contribute his or her best. The care of children by the mother is held as an unnecessary diversion of her energy from the more useful channel of production for the State. Besides, the scientific care and attention which children can get in a state creche or nursery, can not be expected in their homes. As the State is the guardian of all the children, there is no idea of charity or compassion associated with such organisations. It is a matter of daily routine for the mother to work in the factory and pay visits to the creche at certain fixed intervals, to nurse her child.

The system has become so widely based, that not only in the towns, but in all the collective and state farms (Kolkhosi and Sovkhosi) creches have been

introduced. Not only at the railway stations, but even on long distance passenger trains, some railway compartments are reserved where children can be left temporarily in the care of the state railway nurses.

Women's Place in Soviet Russia

There is no country in the world, where such advanced protective laws for women workers exist as in Soviet Russia. Women's emancipation from the bondage of man is another proof of the victory of socialism. In Czarist Russia, she was considered as a chattel. She was dependent upon her father or husband in every respect. She had no vote. She had no opportunity for education and training. She could not apply for a job without the consent of her husband. Her right of inheritance was limited to a one-fourteenth part—the other parts went to the son or sons of her father. Her abysmal ignorance was a common affair. Very often as in India, the peasant husband took a pride and pleasure in beating his peasant wife. Her status was so degraded that she existed for the mere satisfaction of man.

The revolution has entirely humanised the institution of womanhood in Russia. Sex equality is enforced. No longer does woman suffer from any indignity or want of opportunity to stand side by side with man, in all the walks of life, as a citizen, producer, consumer, and even as a member of the Communist Party. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru describes the special woman's department of the Communist Party known as "Genotdel," which carries on vigorous activity for women's education and rights. March 8th is celebrated by the Russian women, throughout the country as "International Women's Day."

General legislation makes provision for the following:—

(1) Seven hours of work.

(2) Yearly holidays.

(3) Social Insurance.

(4) Pension for long service.

(5) Rest Homes.

(6) Sanatorium treatment.

(7) Prohibition of Child labour under fourteen years of age.

But women are protected by special laws. They are as under:—

(1) Employment of women in heavy and dangerous industries such as the chemical and iron industries is prohibited.

(2) Four months maternity vacation is allowed to women workers—two months before and two months after child birth.

(3) Night work and overtime work for pregnant women is strictly prohibited.

(4) No pregnant woman can be sent away from the place of her work, without her consent.

(5) Nursing mothers are allowed special intervals, in addition to the usual hours of rest, during working time, to nurse their children etc.

"In 1920, Lenin could claim that in no country in the world were women so completely and unreservedly free from sex disabilities, whether legal

or customary, as in the U. S. S. R." What has been done by the Soviet Government in the matter of maintenance of maternity homes and hospitals, child welfare institutions, mother crafts, clinics, organisation of lectures and exhibitions for teaching mothers, how to look after themselves and their children, no country in the world has done. It is a most meritorious record.

"The purpose of Soviet Communism in this matter is not merely to be kind to the sufferers—not even chiefly an improvement of the health of the community or the reduction of the frightful rate of infant mortality, of Tsarist Russia,—but specifically the promotion of equality of conditions between men and women. It is in order to go so far as possible towards raising women to an equality with men, in the performance of work, with equal opportunities in the choice of occupation, that so much more is done, collectively for maternity and infancy in the U. S. S. R. than in any other country of the world. What is new in the U.S.S.R. is of course, not the maternity hospital, nor the creche, nor any similar service, which were not altogether unknown, in Tsarist Russia, and are to be seen in tiny numbers, sporadically and capriciously provided by private philanthropy, in nearly every country of the world today. What is unique under Soviet Communism is the universality, ubiquity and completeness of the provision made at the public expense for all the mothers in so vast a country, where six million births take place annually. This universality of provision was not an invention of Lenin and his colleagues. It was one of the many revolutionary social proposals of Karl Marx nearly seventy years ago, which Capitalism

has left to the first Collectivist State to put into operation with any approach to completeness." (Soviet Communism. A New Civilisation page 818.)

The New Palace of Motherhood, that stands on the banks of the Moskva in Moscow is a splendid institution of its kind.

Certain professions such as the medical and teching professions are mainly recruited from and are dominated by women in Russia. Women find their places in the University and the Research Institutions. One third of the industrial technician staff employed in the factories is composed of women. There are women engineers, administrative officers and journalists. Alexandra Kollantai now Soviet Minister at Stockholm is the world's first woman ambassador. Another woman Varvara Nikolaivena Yakovleva is the finance minister of the R. S. F. S. R.

The Family Tie

One of the attacks levelled against State control and guardianship of the children in Soviet Russia is that it tends to the breaking up of the family tie in that country. It is also asserted that inspite of all the boasts of Soviet Russia of its innumerable nurseries and creches, it is a common sight to meet with "lawless bands" of ill-clad and underfed children in the back alleys of the towns. Mr. J. Allan Cash, a journalist who made a trip of some 4,000 miles in Russia recently, and whose account appears in one of the issues of the "Illustrated Weekly of India" indignantly repudiates this statement. He found children no where so happy as in Russia, whether in the State institutions or in the back alleys. He writes "Many people are perturbed

at what they think is the breaking up of family life in Russia. They think that the State takes children away from their parents and brings them up like so many chickens along standardised lines which destroy all family ties. This is far from the case and like many other things which ran to extremes after the revolution, there is now a much rational view taken of family life."

It is a wrong impression that the mechanised frame of the Soviet State has tended or brought about a most damaging effect upon the sanctity and utility of the individual home. Soviet Russia like other nations recognises that individual or family life, is the nucleus of natonal solidarity.

Socialisation of Medicine

The health and medical service in Soviet Russia in the period of twenty years of its experimentation has not reached any absolute state of perfection. Neither is it complete. But the importance that is paid by the State to the health of its people and the great step forward that it has taken shows the remarkable improvement made upon the conditions existing in the Czar's time. Before the revolution, there were fewer than 13,000 qualified doctors in Russia i. e. less than one per 7,000 of the whole urban population and if the rural areas were taken into consideration, this ratio was still much less. The State now recognises that every citizen has a right to be treated free for any illness, especially those who work in the state factory or the state farm. These have priority of claim on the State medical service. Every factory or farm has its own arrangements for medical treatment. The

various dispensaries, polyclinics, ambulatoria, hospitals for general and special diseases are all inter-related and connected with one another. The extent of the advance since the revolution in 1917 can be seen from the following figures. In 1912, there were only six institutions for medical training. In 1930, there were as many as 34. In 1912, there were no medical research institutions. To-day there are 106 such institutions existing in Soviet Russia. Post-graduate courses are given to doctors, every three years as far as practicable. Before the revolution, there were about 26,000 physicians in the whole of Russia. In 1931, there were 76,000 physicians.

The most notable feature of the Russian medical system is that it has "removed the doctor almost entirely from the field of monetary competition."

Less than ten per cent of the doctors are in private practice in the whole of the U. S. S. R. Nearly every doctor now is a state official. The State pays as much attention on curative as on preventive measures and the doctor besides the usual work of treating the patients, undertakes popular hygienic lecturing. The following interview given by Dr. Kuchaidze—Commissar of Health of Georgia, to the authors of "Red Medicine" gives a graphic picture of the present and past Russian medical service.:—

"Formerly there were almost no private doctors for the very poor and the patients had to pay almost impossible fees. Hospitals for the poor were few and most inadequate. Even in hospitals the treatment they received in the main was "general practitioner treatment"; they had no chance of being treated in

the valuable cure places of Georgia. Now the number of doctors has been multiplied and still a larger number are being trained. The former hospitals for the rich are now devoted primarily to the workers and their accommodation has been greatly increased. New hospitals for general and special diseases have been built and the poorest in the land have the advantage, in every department of medicine, of skilled aid in need. The cure places, furthermore, are used by the entire population and patients from every part of Russia are sent to them. This efficiency and universality of medical aid has succeeded a system under which medical care could be secured only by the wealthy or by the fortunate few among the workers who could gain admission to a good hospital.

The doubt was raised as whether under the new regime enterprise and energy of work would not be lowered, now that the incentive of high professional earnings has disappeared. This, we were told, was actively debated among doctors, after the October Revolution, and most of the better physicians feared such a result. Now after fifteen years of planning and the execution of better medical work, it can be definitely said that the fears then entertained were groundless and that the young doctors in all respects display greater efficiency and zeal than was shown in the past. They now work in team, in close co-operation with other doctors, and their work is scientific in character." ("Red Medicine" page 224.)

It is said when the second Five Year Plan is completed the ideal of one doctor to every 1000 people would be reached.

Sanatoria and Rest Clinics

Along with hospitals, polyclinics, and dispensaries, the provision made by the State, for sanatoria, rest and convalescent homes, by converting the fine edifices of the rich and the affluent of Czarist times, for these purposes is significant. What has been achieved by Soviet Russia in this direction is far greater than in any capitalist country of the world. The Russian treatment of tuberculosis and venereal diseases, in the special hospitals provided for the purpose, is on a much wider scale and the effect has been that these scourges have been greatly reduced.

"Liquidation" of Prostitution

The most important achievement of Soviet Russia is the "liquidation" of prostitution. Bertram W. Maxwell gives us a graphic picture of the terrible nature of prostitution that existed in Russia, before the revolution, caused by the terrible economic condition of the poor women and the brutal police laws, which forced the innocent and wayward into a life-long existence of shame, by compelling them to wear the "yellow label." He writes in his book "The Soviet State," "Russia before the war had one of the worst records for prostitution of all countries in Continental Europe. Unspeakable poverty and the monotony and drudgery of small town and country life were fertile soil for the procurer. The pitifully low wage scale of the women workers and domestic servants in Russia, which prevented them from creating any reserve whatsoever, in case of seasonal or temporary unemployment, together with the total defencelessness of that class, was conducive to the successful activity of

traffickers in vice and swelled the ranks of prostitution. The notoriously corrupt Russian police administration fell easily for bait in the form of bribes which the panders offered in exchange for protection. Women who were suspected of practising prostitution were deprived of their documents and were issued in exchange a special identification card, the notorious "yellow ticket." The holder of this "yellow ticket" was automatically excluded from engaging in honest labour. The fact that a woman might have engaged in the practice on account of temporary or seasonal unemployment in order to save herself from starvation had no bearing on the case. The "yellow ticket" chained her to the profession, for the rest of her life and followed her no matter where she was and what she did."

Such was the tyranny practised till the Bolsheviks came to power. Their sense of humanity and justice required that stern measures should be taken for the suppression of the evil and the law's severity was rightly enforced in ferreting out and punishing the agents of prostitution—those middlemen in commercialised vice. "Prophylacteria" for reclaiming the fallen were opened in Moscow and other places. Periodic examination and supervision of the parks and restaurants, public baths and promenades and all places of public amusement, where there lurked the least suspicion of the evil were effectively enforced, with a view to arrest its growth and promote its extermination. A planned educational propaganda to prevent the young from falling into temptation was systematically carried out. "The Bolsheviks hope to create such a frame of mind in the

people that the very idea of the purchase of women will result in such unspeakable revulsion and odium that even those inclined to exploit women for their own purposes will find it socially advantageous to abstain from such acts." ("The Soviet State" page 325.)

By establishing the dignity of labour and by banishing poverty and unemployment, the Bolshevik rule has been able to expunge the evil, which once flourished in that country and which still prevails unabashed in most of the capitalist countries of the world. It is a triumph of Socialism of no mean order —the proudest page in the book of Soviet Russia.

IV. Psychology or the Reconstruction of Human Personality

The fourth point Maurice Hindus discussed with regard to the effect of the Five Year Plan was the psychology or the reconstruction of human personality. Sidney and Beatrice Webb are so enamoured of the new social order established in Soviet Russia, that they consider it as a new civilisation, infinitely better than the present capitalist system in vogue in the rest of the world. The goal of Soviet rule is the re-making of man and what could be a higher aspiration?

We have seen its objective is to change the environment so as to produce those factors which are conducive to the production of the best results, in which all can equally participate. In the transformation of the social order into a classless society, it has banished the sense of exclusiveness and consciousness

of superiority, the seeds of many a social evil. This has been achieved by the establishment of the principle, that culture should not be the prerogative of the few but is the right and privilege of every citizen, without distinction. The universalism of the Soviet system of education, in all its branches is a most salient contributing factor, in the reconstruction of human personality. To make this world a place of happiness, for all is the "modus operandi" of Soviet rule. In this conception of happiness there is no doubt that its perspective is limited to the physical sphere only. It takes no account of metaphysical values, of supernatural conditions. To gain mere material happiness it rightly concludes, that science is the instrument, by the employment of which, the secrets of nature can be unravelled and its powers harnessed for human good. In no country of the world today is so much attention paid and money spent on scientific research as in Russia. The biggest hydro-electric plant in the world is situated in Soviet Russia. The biggest salary that is paid in Russia is to the technician, — the factory manager. He earns as much as 700 to 1000 roubles a month. The enthusiasm and passion for scientific research is so widespread, that it is instilled even in children and young boys. The following narrative by Sidney and Beatrice Webb in their book "Soviet Communism" (pages 971, 972, 973) is of interest:—

"Not so long ago Paul—he is just twelve years old —developed a passion for electricity. He installed a door bell, which stubbornly refused to ring. All of his time he fussed about in his room or in the corridor near the wires and fuses. I suspect and not without

good reason, that the failure of the lighting in our apartment last week was the result of his work.

Leaving at last the bell, Paul designed an electric motor. To be sure his machine had little resemblance to an ordinary motor. It was the size of Paul's fist and represented a sort of flat reel on which was wound thin wire covered with white insulation. The motor lacked the main property common to all motors. It did not move, nor did it bring any thing into motion.

Paul got excited, went somewhere and enquired about some thing. Apparently his enquiries were successful; his snub-nosed face began to beam with joy. After school when he had finished his dinner, Paul began to dress; he put on a warm over-coat and an ear cap.

"Where are you going" asked his father, not lifting his eyes from the newspaper.

"To the Children's Technical Station," Paul replied with an air of importance .... It did not take him long to find the house. House No. 8 was the third from the corner. Paul entered a big yard. At the end of it was a small wooden house and still further, on the other side was a three storied brick building.

"What have you come for, youngster?"

Picking up courage Paul asked in return:

"And who are you? Are you one of the workers of the Technical Station?"

"Yes, I am its manager."

Paul's cheek-boned face brightened up.

"You are the man I want. I ...... I have made an electric motor, only it does not work, and in general ......

The manager of the station smiled.

"Well you have done well in coming here. Come with me."

They went to the door bearing the sign: "Personal Consultation." They entered a big, well-lit room. It was full of people and despite the fact that every body talked, it was not noisy. It was the business like air of a bee-hive in which every thing was in perfect order. Paul joined the group which was crowded about the consultant. Very soon he learned what the defects of his motor were. He was sent to the electro-technical shop located in the same wooden house. With shining eyes and thumping heart Paul saw his motor beginning to rotate. But his enthusiasm was immediately damped for he was told that his model was uneconomical, took too much current, gave little effect; the other defects of his motor were also pointed out to him and it was explained how to rectify them."

The maximum development of individual intelligence with a view that each may contribute his utmost, for the benefit of the community at large, is the maxim of the Soviet rule. There are opportunities for every one, to satisfy his urge for self-improvement and development. The evening classes, the experimental stations, the lectures organised in the Rest and Culture Parks and the Club Houses, the enormous amount of voluntary work rendered after the end of the daily round of service—these are the venues of

self-improvement. The "prophylactotia" for the reclamation of the fallen and the anti-vodka stations, for reforming the drunkard, the continuous propaganda for health and hygiene and against the use of alcohol, bespeak the inculcation of the ideal of the good life.

Capitalism recognises the Biblical truth that poverty can never be banished, as if its ordainment is one of the divine manifestations. By abolishing property and the system of profit, Socialism has nailed this fabrication to the counter. It has falsified the Biblical statement "The poor, ye have always with you." It has evolved a new man, with all the opportunities to rise to the highest stature in society; where inferiority or superiority of complex play no part, where there is no such anomaly as the rich or poor. It is this new psychology, that socialism has created.

Sidney and Beatrice Webb argue that the policy of plenty should be pursued for all, and the following passage, on this plea is very interesting:—

"Now the very idea of universality of participation in the plenty of a prosperous community was never present to the minds of nineteenth century statesmen. This was not because they lacked humanity or charity. They were merely convinced that such universalism was impracticable. Under a system of private ownership of the means of production, when the direct motive for enterprise and employment is, not an increased supply of commodities for enjoyment of the whole people, but the making of profit for the benefit of individuals among them, experience proves that, with the ever increasing aggregation of capital into large units, whilst a minority became wealthy, the

majority remain poor. Lenin and his companions believed that these aggregations must inevitably pass into public ownership and that the substitution of collective for individual property in the means of large scale production, and the deliberately planned administration of these in a condition of social equality, over-came the supposed impracticability of making plenty universal. They had accordingly, no motive for accepting as inevitable the poverty of the poor, whether the poor were in poverty through their individual weakness or character or capacity or through that of the race or class to which they belonged.

It will be noted that the Bolshevik conception of the universality of plenty was unconnected with any belief in the social value, or even in the possibility of identity or equality among individuals, whether in work, capacity or morality, or in the amount and kind of service rendered or in the rate of earnings or wages or other form of income. What was aspired to in the future was the very opposite of equality among individuals, namely, a state of society, in which each person would voluntarily serve according to his capacity, and receive from the community what was appropriate to his needs. Only as the ability varies enormously, while the material needs are much the same for the ablest as for the stupidest, and the cultural needs do not greatly differ in cost, there is no reason to fear that this formula would again divide society into rich and poor, as the institution of private property inevitably does."

Marxism

If it be true that "Mankind progresses only on its belly" as said by one Russian author (Malinowski)


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the Soviet Government has proved that to the hilt. Lenin put into practice the teachings of Marx and Engels and his great success, in translating Marxism into practice no doubt places him on the roll of great men of action. Marx believed that human behaviour is a compound of biological and social influences. In Marx's dialectical materialism there is no place for religion, for God, or any thing supernatural. Lenin followed this up. He ousted religion. All he aimed at was the living of a good life—to create conditions for a good life for all, without any distinction.

Results of the Practice of Marxism

Marx taught of biological and social influences in creating the best environment and conditions for the healthy and vigorous growth of man. Lenin carried out that idea, by socialising all the human activities. We have seen the results of these categorical changes in the general uplift. Dr. Dillon when he visited the U.S.S.R. in 1918, just a year after the revolution made the following observations:—

"In the Bolshevik movement there is not the vestige of a constructive or social idea. Even the Western admirers of Lenin and Trotsky can not discover any. Genuine socialism means the organic ordering of the social whole and of this in the Bolshevik process there is no trace. Far from that a part is treated as the whole, and the remainder is no better off than were the serfs under Alexander I and Nicholas I. For Bolshevism is Tsardom upside down. To Capitalists it meets treatment as bad as that which the Tsars dealt to serfs. It suppresses newspapers,

forbids liberty, arrests or banishes the elected of the nation and connives at or encourages crimes of diabolical ferocity."

The above remarks he had to change, when on the second visit in 1928, ten years later, he wrote as under:—

"Everywhere people are thinking, working, combining, making scientific researches and industrial inventions. If one could obtain a bird's eye view of the numerous activities of the citizens of the Soviet Republics one could hardly trust the evidence of one's senses. Nothing like it; nothing approaching it in variety, intensity, tenacity of purpose has ever been witnessed. Revolutionary endeavour is melting colossal obstacles and fusing heterogeneous elements into one great people; not indeed a nation in the old meaning but a strong people cemented by quasi-religious enthusiasm .... The Bolsheviks have then accomplished much of what they aimed at, and more than seemed attainable by any human organisation under the adverse conditions in which they had to cope. They have mobilised well over 50,000,000 of listless, dead and alive human beings, and infused into them a new spirit. They have wrecked and buried the entire old world order in one sixth of the globe, and are digging graves for it everywhere else. They have shown themselves able and resolved to meet emergcy and to fructify opportunity. Their way of dealing with home rule and the nationalities is a master piece of ingenuity and elegance. None of the able statesmen of today in other lands has attempted to vie with them in their method of satisfying the claims of the

minorities. In all these and many other enterprises, they are moved by a force which is irresistible, almost thaumaturgical ...... Bolshevism is no ordinary historic event. It is one of the vast world Cathartic agencies to which we sometimes give the name of Fate, which appear at long intervals to consume the human tares and clear the ground for a new order of men and things. The Hebrews under Moses and Joshua, the Huns under Attila, the Mongols, under Jenghis Khan and the Bolsheviks under Lenin, are all tarred with the same transcendental brush. Bolshevism takes its origin in the unplumbed depths of being; nor could it have come into existence were it not for the necessity of putting an end to the injustice and iniquities that infect our superannuated civilisation. It is amoral and inexorable because transcendental. It has come as Christianity came, not for peace but for the sword; and its victims out-number those of the most sanguinary wars. To me it seems to be the mightiest driving force for good or for evil in the world today. It is certainly a stern reality, smelling perhaps of sulphur and brimstone, but with a mission on earth, and a mission which will undoubtedly be fulfilled."

If Dr. Dillion were to make a third visit, his surprise would be further intensified as the progress made in the last decade is greater than what he witnessed in 1928.

World Socialism

Russia has taken precedence in establishing the first Collectivist State in Europe and it should not be surprising, if the Capitalist world which has scoffed at its attempts, blazed the trail of its faults and short-

comings and drawn lurid pictures of its atrocities, should file in its ranks ultimately. Socialism is the only alternative if the world is to be saved from the holocaust of a devastating war. We shall speak on this subject in a later chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CULT OF THE GOD-LESS

WE have so far elaborated on the good points of Soviet Russia. Soviet Communism has changed the material aspect of the existence of 170 million of people living on one-sixth of the earth's surface. It has raised a new social order; it has opened the door of opportunity to all. But the cult of the godless, which Lenin preached can not but detract from the value and usefulness of Communism. Even eminent physicists like Sir Oliver Lodge have endorsed the view of the existence of the supernatural. Spiritualism has achieved an unassailable position, in the world today. No longer is India the only home of spiritualism. Spiritualism has made considerable progress in the West also—especially in England, in the last twenty years. Darwinism and Agnosticism may appeal to the intelligentsia but as Bacon said some centuries ago, it is superficial knowledge and experience, that cause atheism. A deeper learning must turn the sceptic mind to God, the Cause of all Creation. The immortality of soul is the cardinal doctrine of all religions of the world. To discard or ignore it, is to miss the purpose of life.

In the case of Soviet Russia, there was however, some justification, for its defiant attitude towards religion.

Religion was at its lowest ebb at the time of the Czars. The notorious Rasputin, was the favourite at the Czar's palace. He was his spiritual adviser. He was known as much for his diabolical drinking bouts

and sexual excesses as for his religious fanaticism. He disgusted every one and was eventually violently removed from the Royal house. The village priesthood was ignorant and lived upon the susceptibilities of the poor by pretending to perform miracles. The monasteries were in receipt of large incomes derived from rent. They were the "nests of miracle mongering." Pagan magic and incantation played the part of religion. A professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of London said "He could only come to one conclusion and it is a conclusion that all true friends of religion will share—nearly all that religion has been and has meant in Russia ought to perish for ever from the face of the earth and from the memory of men."

It was no wonder therefore if Lenin under the circumstances, indignantly resolved to uproot religion, which had played such a false and hypocritical role in the life of the people. He, like Marx and Engels, his political *gurus* insisted upon the denial "of there being any known manifestation of the supernatural." The following description of the godless views held by Lenin is interesting:—

"He (Lenin) steadfastly insisted that the universe known to mankind (including mind equally with matter) was the sphere of science: and that this steadily advancing knowledge, the result of human experience of the universe was the only useful instrument and the only valid guide of human action. There is, nowhere any miracle, nowhere any immortality, no soul, other than the plainly temporary mind of man; and no survival of personality after death. Lenin refused to admit any hesitation or dubiety in the

matter. He would not consent to any veiling of these dogmatic conclusions by the use of such words as agnosticism or spiritualism."

Lenin found religion no better than superstition. He saw no scientific basis in its superstructure. It led only to magic and served as opium for the people.

The first fury of the people was against the priests, when the Revolution broke out. They were the first to be expropriated of their lands, and some of them were done to death. Atheism being a dominant feature of Bolshevik propaganda, there was spontaneous mass conversion. Not only Christians but Moslems, the once very faithful adherents of Islam men, women and children joined the holocaust of irreligion. Some of the churches were turned into Public Halls and Museums. Public religious instruction was forbidden. Anti-god museums were established in different cities, to inflame popular rage against the practices of the priestly class and denounce all religion and God. A weekly newspaper called "Bezbaznik" (The Godless) was issued from the state press. The "Union of the Godless" established a net work of branches throughout Soviet Russia. In 1929, the total number of branches of this society which took the designation later on of "The Union of the Militant Atheists" was 9,000. This number later on swelled to 30,000; 50,000; 70,000.

It is a matter however for gratification that the rebellious spirit against God and religion which took such a prominent and unsavoury part, immediately after the revolution has now died away. The later decrees in the time of Stalin display a

reasonableness and tolerance towards the practice of religion. Church going is not prohibited. No religious books are published by the state but religious persecution is no longer permitted. Avowal of religion is not a disqualification to any of the highest posts in the Union. Now that the people are settled down to a peaceful order of Society, it should not be surprising if a religious revival takes place and religion in its pristine purity is once more enthroned.

Sexual Morals

Sexual excesses are contrary to Communistic ethics. But the marriage and divorce laws are so loose and the ideas of the people have gone through such a revolution, regarding the sex question, that what may be regarded as natural, according to their code of ethics is repugnant to us, Indians.

"Children grow up accustomed to human equally with animal nudity and whilst they gradually learn that certain parts of conduct are suited not for company but for privacy, they are never taught, that any bodily function has a special quality of indecency." (Sidney and Beatrice Webb, "Soviet Communism" page 1046.)

The above picture is enough to give us the creeps. But according to the Bolshevik code, sexual intercourse is a personal matter and provided certain obligations are fulfilled, in regard to the maintenance of any issue, the law gives complete freedom to the parties, to marry, to co-habit and to divorce, at their sweet will, without any restriction. There is no stigma of illigitimacy. Legitimate and illigtimate children have the same status and the same pri-

vileges. The first years after the revolution were chiefly marked by sexual promiscuity of a most revolting and dangerous type. Sexual intercourse was considered as natural, as eating or drinking a cup of water, when thirsty. Lenin atheistic as he was, was pure minded and he revolted against the "glass of water" theory. His conversation with Clara Zetkin in 1921 is often quoted and it is so pregnant with good sense, that we requote it below:—

"I think this glass of water theory is completely un-Marxist and moreover anti-social. In sexual life there is not only simple nature to be considered, but also culture characteristics, whether they are of a high or low order. In his "Origin of the Family" Engels shows how significant is the development and refinement of the general sex urge into individual sex love. The relations of the sexes to each other are not simply an expression of the play of forces between the economics of society or a physical need, isolated in thought, by study, from the physiological aspect. It is rationalism, and not Marxism, to want to trace changes in these relations directly, dissociated from their connections with ideology as a whole, to the economic foundations of society. Of course thirst must be satisfied. But will the normal man in normal circumstances lie down in the gutter and drink out of a puddle, or out of a glass with a rim greasy from many lips? But the social aspect is the most important of all. Drinking water is of course an individual affair. In love two lives are concerned and a third, a new life arises. It is that which gives it its social interest, which gives rise to a duty towards the community.

As a Communist I have not the least sympathy for the glass of water theory, although it bears the fine title "satisfaction of love." In any case, this liberation of love is neither new nor communist. You will remember that, about the middle of the last century, it was preached as the "emancipation of the heart," in "romantic literature." In bourgeois practice it became the emancipation of the flesh. At that time the preaching was more talented than it is today, and as for the practice, I cannot judge. I don't mean to preach ascetism by my criticism. Not in the least. Communism will not bring ascetism, but joy of life; power of life and a satisfied love of life will help to do that. In my opinion the present wide-spread hypertrophy in sexual matters does not give joy and force to life, but takes it away."

It is said millions of "misfits" continue to be linked together in life and to save them from their embarrassing situation, it is necessary to relax marriage laws to give them greater freedom of action. Not that "divorce" is encouraged but it is held that if a married couple voluntarily wish to dissolve the marriage tie, for reason of mutual unhappiness, why should that freedom be denied to them. Ascetism is not preached by communism. The leading of a good life is the precept and ideal which the state holds forth but it recognises also the limitations of human life and character.

Certainly we have to face facts as they are, but the relaxation has led to such promiscuity that it can not but be held as an evil and a blot on Soviet rule. What is forgotten is that it is spirit that matters and that man's real triumph lies in controlling desires.

This is life's greatest mission. It is a misguided conception that man must satisfy his human desires. There is the God in man, which should not be overlooked. The divorce figures give an indication, that there is something rotten in the State of Denmark. We are told that on an average there were fifteen to twenty five marriages entered in the City Registery, at Moscow, every day, against seven or eight divorces, a day. A most pitiable condition, no doubt.

Political Hatred

Yet another evil of Soviet rule is its virulent hatred of the bourgeoisie and all those who are opposed to its system of government. Every citizen whether in the trade union or the collective farm has a right of unlimited criticism. He can expose the faults and shortcomings of any department and its officials. He comments upon the various ways in which the economic and administrative machinery of the city, province or the state can be improved upon. But the State policy is set down by the Communist Party, through their leader Stalin, and this has to be accepted. Such is the iron rule of the Soviet State, that if any one has strong reasons to differ from the State policy, he is immediately suspected and marked out as a traitor. Every factory is a school of Communistic culture. Every operative working in a factory is forged in communistic armour. His thought, his conduct, his breath, his life have to be in tune with Communism and love of the Soviet State. Any criticism of the Soviet principles of economics, any expression of thought that is in opposition to Marxism or Leninsm, at once singles out the individual, particularly if he be a *Kulak* or a Church man, for the

severest censure. The prison system of the U. S. S. R. is the most humane on the surface of the earth. Those sentenced for breaking the social laws, such as theft, embezzlement, assault, public disorder, are treated with deserving leniency and kindness. These lapses are considered as momentary and the prisons are the schools where the offenders are reformed, remade into new men. But the treatment meted out to political offenders is of an exceptionally harsh nature. Diabolical cruelty has marked many a case of political turpitude.

The virulence of hatred with which the followers of Trotsky are persecuted and shot only because of difference of opinion in state policy and not because they are not Marxists—the series of cold murders perpetrated to save the Revolution from sliding into the trenches of Capitalism or Fascism, however necessary they were in the first years of its initiation, cannot be justified any longer. Massani relates in his "Soviet Sidelights" page 83 that for the murder of Kirov, 117 persons were executed and 50,000 were sent into exile. There can be no denial that the Soviet rule was founded on the blood of the countless millions. But in the coming years, Soviet Russia must entirely change its line of action and policy. It must meet its opponents with a velvet glove of sound argument and reason and not with the iron hand of suspicion and ruthlessness, if its claim on humanity is to be established for all time.

The Balance Sheet

If we were to strike a balance sheet of achievements of Soviet Russia, it will not be denied that it has

made a great success of its plan of economy. It has proved what a planned economy in a Socialistic State is capable of achieving in the creation of new conditions for a varied and full life. It is often contended that the standard of living in Soviet Russia, even today is not so high as in other capitalist countries of the world. Mrs. Barbara Wootton writing in her book "Plan or No Plan" issued in 1934 says (pages 164/165) "We know that this experiment has not yet produced a people who are rich as capitalism counts riches. We know that the general standard of living is such that there are not many English workers in regular work whose condition would be improved if they were to change places with their Russian colleagues." This was no doubt true in 1934. Had the Revolution been brought about by a nation like the Germans known for the accuracy of their methods and for their high intelligence and industry, the results would have been greater. Besides, one has to take into account the various adverse factors which the Soviets had to face —the armed opposition when the experiment was tried, the revolt of the peasantry, the poverty and inefficiency and illiteracy of the millions of the Russian people and above all the instability of Russia's economic relationship with the rest of the world. Our surprise on the contrary is that in spite of the overwhelming odds against it, the Soviet Plan should have survived and mastered the situation. The Russian workers are still poorer than American or British labourers but they enjoy collectively "amenities which surpass the wildest dreams of the working class of bourgeois countries." They do not hold their trade union meetings in beer shops like the British

or in ill-ventilated rooms, which go a begging for a tenant but in the palaces of the rich, who flaunted their wealth in the days of the Czar, but whose edifices are now converted into institutions for the proletariat. There is no trail of servility. There is no West End or East End of London. The People's poverty is not aggravated by sights and scenes of luxury and ostentation of the rich and the affluent. The highest salary paid in the Soviet Union is about a thousand roubles a month. No worker draws a less salary in a town than eighty roubles. In India, the high officials draw salaries which vie with the incomes of Rajahs and Nawabs. The highest dignitary, the Viceroy gets about Rs. 20,000/- a month and the governors of the provinces about ten thousand rupees each.

It was not an idle boast when M. Litvinoff speaking at the world Monetary and Economic Conference (June 1933) said that in his country "such symptons as over-production, the accumulation of stocks of goods for which no market can be found, unemployment, wage cuts, increase in foreign indebtedness, bankruptcy are conspiouous by their absence." Is this not a great triumph of Socialism?

One writer writes "The adoption of a Socialist-planned economic system in the Soviet Union, which ranks with the United States of America as one of the two largest and richest national economic units in the world is an event of great and unmistakable significance. Because of the extent and variety of its natural resources and its self-sufficiency as regards basic food stuffs and raw materials, the Soviet Union is freer than most countries from economic dependence

upon the rest of the world and this fact enhances both the importance and the practicability of the experiment." The same author continues "What is the balance sheet of planned economy in the Soviet Union" up-to-date? It has certainly helped to save the country from the unemployment, the industrial and commercial stagnation, the waste of non-producing equipment which have been conspicuous features in the life of most highly industrialised countries between 1929 and 1931 ....

....

....

Notwithstanding all defects and shortcomings in execution, Soviet-planned economy has proved its vitality and workability and has given the Soviet Union a powerful push towards the goals which its Communist rulers have set out i.e. industrialism along modern lines and collectivisation of agriculture. Perhaps the decisive comparison between Soviet-planned economy and capitalist economy will come if and when the every day needs of the population as regards food, clothing and ordinary manufactured goods are satisfied. Then the directors of the planned economic system, whose task today is in one sense comparatively simple, namely to drive ahead production in every field at maximum speed, will find themselves confronted with the more complicated problem of diverting to other fields labour and capital from those industries which are already producing as much as can be consumed.

The Communists are confident that their system affords the possibility, through increasing wages or through shortening the hours of labour of passing on

the benefits of increased out-put and higher productivity of labour to the workers and to the consumers, without ever allowing supply to grow unmanageably large, in relation to demand. They believe that their economic history will be free from the periodic crises and depressions which mark capitalist economics. For this reason among others, they are destined within a relatively near future to achieve Lenin's ideal of "overtaking and outstripping, as regards technique, the leading capitalist countries." (Soviet Economics, pages 18 and 19.)

Walter Duranty, American correspondent of the *New York Times*, in Moscow refers to Soviet Russia, as a Land of Hope. In a despatch dated August 1938, he says:—

"The young Soviets who more and more are ruling the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin, are full of cheerfulness and hope. They have a bumper crop in sight, which means much in the Soviet Union.

Five years ago, Moscow was more like an overgrown village than a modern capital. Today it is a centre that challenges Detroit in utilitarian splendour. Its bronze and marble sub-way would make Londoners and New Yorkers blush for their ugly tubes and sub-ways and its bridges across the Moscow river arouse the envy of Paris and its Seine.

Russians are mastering the mechanism and industrialisation that they paid so dearly to learn. Finally, they are succeeding in exploiting and developing natural resources equal to those in Canada, the United States and Mexico together.

"Russia is a land of progress, youth and hope."

Unmistakenly, Soviet Russia has made great progress, but it is only a material progress. The system, however praiseworthy, still lacks in the elements of perfection. It loses its charm because spiritual values are ignored. What counts in the fulfillment of the Law is spirit and not matter alone.

"Neither the Mawkish humanism fit for a Congress of intellectuals nor Marxist humanism of a more heroic character but charged with hate and staggering beneath the weight of materialism can provide substantial nourishment; only the true Christian humanism can do this." (Iswolsky "Soviet Man—Now" page 86.)

The spirit and enthusiasm that have infiltrated in the young studying in the schools and colleges of the U. S. S. R. to-day, must sooner or later, result in their resentment at pursuing and satisfying pure physical wants only. Their love for transcendental justice should evoke in them that hunger for spiritual food, which Marxism so unkindly denies and blots out from their daily existence. It is only a question of time. Already there has awakened a religious revival in the U. S. S. R. The churches are no longer closed. Iswolsky—a daughter of a former Russian ambassador speaks of the new phase, that is beginning to dawn in the U. S. S. R.,—the spiritualisation of the Revolution, the relaxation of the anti-God front.

With the cessation of the anti-religious war, the "new men" forged by the Revolution, will begin to think of the spiritual values also. "Man faced with

the mystery of love and death, man in his solitariness face to face with God,"—this is the new man that is in the embryo. If he is not visible today in Soviet Russia, he must make his appearance, as soon as he has won completely his social independence, which is within his reach and which is in progress. When this is complete Soviet Russia's experiment will prove the greatest success in history. It will then silence all critics and herald a new age—a new dawn in the History of Human civilisation.

CHAPTER IX

FOREIGN POLICY OF SOVIET RUSSIA

THE most notable contribution of Soviet Russia to humanity is its firm adherence to the policy of peace. Its army is for defence only. "Political peace we have decided to pursue to the utmost extent of our power and means. We do not desire the smallest bit of other people's territory. At the same time we shall not yield even an inch of ours."

These are the memorable words of Stalin, which sum up the foreign policy of Soviet Russia. As a prominent member of the League of Nations, the performance of Soviet Russia is a notable one. It has expressed itself on the side of the disarmament of nations. It has made pacts of non-aggression with nearly all important countries of the world, except Japan, Germany and Italy. The alliance of France and Great Britain with Soviet Russia, in the event of a world war is a measure of self-defence. The most inveterate enemy of Soviet Russia is Japan, who is seeking hegemony in the East. • Inspite of provocations, Soviet Russia has kept its head and heels cool. To avoid the contingency of a war, she sold her railway in Manchukuo to Japan, on most easy terms. The mission of Socialism being to establish human happiness, peace in the world is *sine qua non*, and the main guarantee of its success.

When the revolution was effected, Lenin's policy was to create militant forces in all the countries of the world, in favour of socialism. Karl Marx's slogan "Workers of all countries, unite" was given the widest

publicity. Soviet money flowed from Moscow, for the propagation of Marxism. For the triumph of socialism, it was held necessary that other countries of the world should follow the example of Soviet Russia. In its aloofness was its weakness. Its strength lay only in the unison of other countries, following its economic policy.

National secretariats were organised in 44 different countries—England, Australia, South Africa, India, Canada, Ireland, Palestine and Egypt, Germany, France and her colonies, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Czecho-Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Finland, Esthonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Bulgaria, Jugo-Slavia, Rumania, Albania, Greece and Syria, the United States of America, Mexico and South America, Sweeden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Japan, China, Korea, Mongolia, Turkey and Persia. All these ramifications were strengthened by the Communist Party and the day was looked forward to, of a Revolution of the Proletariat of the World.

But the mission of world Socialism failed. No country would take orders from Moscow; not even India and China poor as they were and anxious to speed their way to the goal of emancipation.

Soviet Russia had therefore to change its tactics. It had to give up the plan of stirring up revolutions in the countries of the world. It has set itself now exclusively to the task of building up socialism within its own borders and the success achieved in so short a time, should be demonstration enough to the world of the practicability and efficiency of socialism. "The Soviet citizen devoted his life to the building of

a Socialist society because he is convinced that such a society will improve everybody's life." Today the most resolute converts to Socialism are those who visit Russia with a view to compare how far that country has progressed in different branches of technology, the chemists, the physiologists, the doctors, the engineers, the educationists, and those who meet in international conferences.

John Gunther an American journalist and the author of the famous book "Inside Europe"—predicts that if Soviet Russia were given ten years of absolute peace, it would become one of the greatest powers on earth. This is how socialism is building up Russia.

"Peace is indivisible" is the Russian slogan.

To the French Press in 1935, Litvinof made the following statement which sums up in very simple words the foreign policy of Soviet Russia:—

"First, the Soviet Government does not need land or property belonging to other countries and it has therefore no intention of making war upon any one. Secondly, under the conditions of modern imperialism, any war must be converted into a bloody universal clash and slaughter; for under present conditions no war can be localised and no country is able to maintain neutrality, no matter how hard it may try. Thirdly, any war causes privations and sufferings primarily to the great masses and the Government of the Soviet Union, which is a government of the toilers is opposed to and hates war."

The following interview of Stalin with Mr. Roy Howard, head of the Scripps-Howard newspapers in America, is significant:—

Mr. Roy asked, "May there not be an element of danger in the genuine fear, existing in what you term capitalist countries, of an intention on the part of the Soviet Union to force its political theories on other nations?"

"There is no justification for such fears" replied M. Stalin. "If you think that the people of the Soviet Union have any desire themselves and by force to alter the face of the surrounding states, then you are badly mistaken. The people of the Soviet Union naturally desire that the face of the surrounding states should change but this is the business of the surrounding states themselves.

I fail to see what dangers the surrounding States can see in the ideas of the Soviet people if these states are firmly seated in their saddles."

Socialism is the greatest bulwark against the menace of war. So long as Nationalism and Imperialism continue, the world will be threatened with wars of the most sanguinary nature. All the peace talks and all the peace efforts can be of no avail, in a society, the superstructure of which is built on the foundation of national jealousies and national rivalries. This reminds us of the story of the frantic efforts made by Mr. Ford, the American millionaire to end the last war in Europe, related by H. G. Wells in his book "The Shape of Things to Come."

In 1915, there was a strong move that America, either alone or in collaboration with neutral countries such as Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland and Holland should form a permanent arbitration board

and bring an end to the war in Europe. Woodrow Wilson—the great pacifist was awaited upon by deputations to end war. Ford's peaceful mind was working like a volcano. He resolved to play his part in ending the war. He thought he would be able to give an impetus to the idea of mediating with a view to end war, by going over to the belligerent countries, in a "Peace Ship." "I want to get those boys out of the trenches" said Ford. His "Peace Ship" project was given the widest publicity. Invitations were issued to eminent men in America and Europe. His appeal for peace did create a response. This showed that the human heart was on the side of peace. But did the mission succeed? As soon as the project took concrete shape and the date of the departure of the "Peace Ship" from New York to Christiana, neared, the weather-cocks changed their minds. There were apologies upon apologies from most of them, who refused to join the peace venture at the last moment. The "Peace Ship" sailed but in a different atmosphere.

The U. S. A. had been making huge profits by its export trade, which was flourishing under war conditions. Munitions of every sort were being sold at enormously enhanced prices to the belligerents. "Such great banking houses as Morgan and Co., were facilitating the financial subjugation of Europe to America, through debts for these supplies." (Wells page 65.) American finance and the American Big Business interests, immediately scented the danger to their profits, by this incisive drive of Ford, for peace. The American Press was whipped into activity. It railed and scorned and poured its missiles of invective and ridicule, upon the peace project. "No expedient was

too mean, no lie, no trick, too contemptible, if only it helped thwart and disillusion Ford." Poor Mr. Ford was so drenched in ridicule that hardly had his ship arrived in Christiana, than disillusioned and dispirited, he abandoned the project. It was an abject surrender. He realised that it was a "wild goose chase." The "Peace Ship" bladder collapsed. A little later the same peace loving Mr. Ford, allowed his huge automobile factories to be converted into an arsenel for the manufacture of war munitions, on a gigantic scale, when the U. S. A. entered the War.

Not all the peace plans, not all the Leagues of Nations, not all the pious resolutions and intentions can bring us even one whit nearer to the goal of ever lasting peace. The looting of Abyssinia, the surrender of Czecho-slovakia to Nazi Germany, the trampling upon China by Japan—these are but the merest indications and the fruits of rank imperialism and nationalism, which disfigure the pages of history. Nothing can dispel war and ensure peace, unless the present social order is changed. The contribution of Soviet Russia in this direction is the most salient and significant. When Chamberlain was negotiating the surrender of Czecho-Slovakia to the imperious demands of Herr Hitler, at the historic Munich Conference in 1938—it was dubious whether this action would avert war in Europe for all time. The following extracts from Stalin's speech at the time, give an indication of the firm resolve of Soviet Russia not to swerve an inch from its line of foreign policy:—

"Soviet Russia wants peace and will enforce peace. It is not aggressive. It hates aggression but it can meet

it and defeat it. It will remain faithful to its treaties. Russia is working at its own re-construction. Her road does not lead to war, inspite of the fact that war holds no terror for her. We are strong enough to prevent war from breaking out again. And we shall prevent it."

CHAPTER X

REVOLUTION OR EVOLUTION

THOSE opposed to Socialism argue that it provokes hatred and causes violence and class warfare, which is inevitable. All the good, Russia has been able to achieve is belittled on account of the atrocities which Socialism has brought in its train. No sane man can approve of any system that requires the rule of the sword. But Soviet Russia's atrocities however deplorable are not now so frequent, and are exaggerated beyond description. Day in and day out even now when a settled atmosphere is prevailing in the country and it is recuperating by peaceful means, there continues a stream of vituperation against Stalin's terror in Soviet Russia. Exaggerated stories of executions not by tens but by hundreds of notable men accused of sabotage and wrecking continue to appear in the daily press. We are told every comrade is suspected as a traitor and shot in the dark. A local journal writes, "This purge has been going on for several months without ending and the impression created in the whole world is that the present ruler of Russia, Mr. Stalin and his associates have lost their heads and soon will have to face the very counter revolution, which they so much dread now." How far the above picture is true, we shall leave to the reader to judge. Soviet Russia is at present busy building a three-thousand-mile road, connecting China with Asiatic Russia, with a view to rapidly transporting munitions and men, if necessity arises, to help a nation in distress, against the atrocities of the Japs.

The bogy raised that Socialism means class warfare and therefore it should be eschewed should not disturb us. If we look at the history of mankind, there is an unquestionable indication, that man has progressed, in every direction, intellectually, socially, morally and spiritually. Aristotle considered woman as a chattel and slavery was recognised as a natural institution. War was held even lately as a biological necessity and its glorification was dinned by Germany in the ears of its citizens, to such an extent that it led to war in Europe in 1914, of the most catastrophic nature. To-day, out-lawry of war is an universal cry, though the nations do not know how to achieve it, because of the faulty and unnatural economic system on which society is based and which thwarts its designs of peace. What wars of horror and cruelty were raged in the name of religion?—The iniquities of the Spanish Inquisition, who is not aware of?

Man has progressed steadily from the cradle of civilisation. We are better than our fathers and our sons will be better than we are. The sense of justice grows more and more in us as we advance. Slavery has been abolished. Woman has come into her rightful position. Our laws are more humane. We treat the criminal now more with a desire to re-condition him and reform him than to punish him. Religion is throwing off its garb of hypocracy. Its essentials are grasped and superstition and silly customs are slowly fading away. Spiritualism once derided is now paving its way, supported by science. Sir Oliver Lodge forsees a time, when in every family will be born a medium,

with the psychic gift to talk with those who have crossed to the other world.

The world is changing fast for its betterment. Science has brought distant parts into a nearer compass, by means of the wireless, the aeroplane and the cinema. The world state is the dream. Socialism makes a bid for the world's happiness and peace. The ethical impulse behind the Socialist mind is the love of justice. It must denounce the waste and inefficiency of Capitalism, as much as its flagrant abuses and injustices.

England to-day of all the Capitalist countries of the world is more Socialistic in practice, than any other country. Its Labour Party is a live force in the Parliament. England is building up Socialism by its characteristic slow evolutionary methods. Its political constitution was wrought by stages, "broadening down by precedent to precedent." It has known no blood baths; no red revolution in its history, only a bourgeois revolution. Its achievement is due to its unfailing sense of realities and its innate belief in justice and equity. Whatever its mistakes in the past, its imperialism and capitalism must soon decay and cease to exist as an economic policy. It is not surprising to state that it is in fact, preparing for Socialism. Its poor are better looked after than in any capitalist country of the world. It avoids war. It has no more dreams of conquest in distant lands to add to its empire. Man's happiness, whether he be brown, black or fair is the main objective of humanity and this factor can not be ignored any longer.

There is nothing for any government to fear in the dissemination of Socialistic teachings. To proscribe

books, as in India, to stop Communistic or Socialistic gatherings and speeches, is but to deprive man of his inherent right to free expression of thought. When a book is proscribed, it creates a greater spirit of revolt. The spirit for enquiry innate in man can never be crushed, subdued or thwarted. Socialism is a live force and it must spread its message in the world.

Soviet Russia established it by its rule of iron and sword. One author computes, that it entailed the following murders:—

7 members of the Royal family, 31 bishops and archbishops, 1500 priests, 16,367 professors and students, 34,585 doctors, judges, lawyers and magistrates, 56,340 army officers, 65,890 members of the nobility, 79,900 civil servants, 1,96,000 working men and women, 2,68,000 soldiers and sailors, 8,90,000 peasants—a total of 1,608,680 men and women. (The "Spectre of Communism" by Henry Gibbs, page 36.) It is a most gruesome tale indeed—forced as it was on the Bolsheviks by foreign intervention. No country in the world would willingly travel such a path of blood. The poverty of the millions in Russia, the despotic Czardom, the depraved nobility, the hypocritical priesthood, inflamed men to acts of desperation. Such means of violence are opposed to the ideology of Socialism and Russia's great error should be the guiding example to other countries. What is conquered by the sword has to be maintained by the sword and Socialism which means love and brotherhood has no meaning, if it is to be spread at the point of the bayonet, by spilling the blood of one's own brother. It is to avoid the path of war, that

Socialism should be legalised by every government in every country and its teachings taught in every school and college. It is thus that its so called incentive to violence can be eschewed and as in England the soil be prepared, for the fruitful growth of its peaceful seedling, which is the only solution for a happier and better world.

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